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A SHORT PSYCHOLOGY OF RELIGION

By

G. J. JORDAN

D.D., Litt.D.

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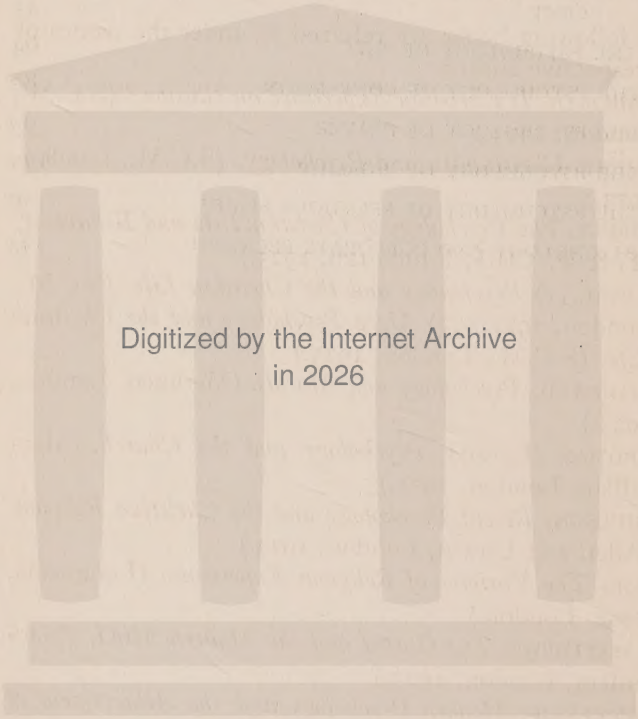

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PREFACE

THIS is a companion volume to my *The Story of Psychology* (Benn). Its aim is to gather up the best results of the work of our leading Psychologists of Religion in such a way that they may be accessible to the thinking public, whose interest in all departments of Psychology seems unabated.

The following books are referred to under the names of their respective authors:

H. BALMFORTH, *Is Christian Experience an Illusion?* (S.C.M., London, 1923.)

F. R. BARRY, *Christianity and Psychology.* (S.C.M., London, 1923.)

W. S. BRUCE, *The Psychology of Christian Life and Behaviour.* (T. & T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1923.)

T. W. PYM, (1) *Psychology and the Christian Life.* (S.C.M., London, 1921.) (2) *More Psychology and the Christian Life.* (S.C.M., London, 1925.)

J. A. HADFIELD, *Psychology and Morals.* (Methuen, London, 1923.)

O. HARDMAN (Editor), *Psychology and the Church.* (Macmillan, London, 1925.)

C. E. HUDSON, *Recent Psychology and the Christian Religion.* (Allen and Unwin, London, 1923.)

W. JAMES, *The Varieties of Religious Experience.* (Longmans, 1902, London.)

W. R. MATTHEWS, *The Gospel and the Modern Mind.* (Macmillan, London, 1925.)

J. G. MCKENZIE, *Modern Psychology and the Achievement of Christian Personality.* (National S.S. Union, London.)

J. B. PRATT, *The Religious Consciousness.* (Macmillan, New York, 1923.)

W. B. SELBIE, *The Psychology of Religion.* (Oxford, 1924.)

F. C. SPURR, *The New Psychology and the Christian Faith.* (New York, 1925.)

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A SHORT PSYCHOLOGY OF RELIGION

CHAPTER ONE

THE NEW APPROACH TO RELIGION

A PSYCHOLOGY OF RELIGION is the inevitable result of the confluence of two streams of thought: the scientific and the religious. Science began its work among the stars, and has successively and successfully carried on its operations in every department of life. In its desire to discover harmony behind the phenomena of life, it has now penetrated the secret recesses of the conscious and unconscious processes of the human mind, and even those solemnest recesses where the springs of religious life are found. The outcry of those who considered this intrusion as sacrilege could no more allay the desire than the outcry of certain people could prevent the excavations into the tomb of Tutankhamen in the Valley of the Kings.

'Science has conquered one field after another, until now it is entering the most complex, the most inaccessible, and, of all, the most sacred domain—that of religion. The Psychology of Religion has for its work to carry the well-established methods of science into the analysis and organization of the facts of the religious consciousness, and to ascertain the laws which determine its growth and character.'[1]

The other stream of thought is religious and chiefly in the sense of contrast to the old supremacy of dogmatic theology. The modern tendency to turn to the religious consciousness and to religious experience for authority has been almost as influential as the driving force of scientific thought. Unconscious of the dangers of this attitude, people have wanted to examine the lava-flow of Christian and religious

[1] Starbuck, p. 1.

experience as it emerges from the crater of the soul and before it has set into the hard rock of dogma or theology. The dangers of mere subjectivity – of the emphasis on 'my feelings,' 'my volitions,' 'my thoughts' – have not stemmed this stream of thought, and one of the most interesting expressions of it is found in the modern tendency of Anglo-Catholicism, by which preachers are giving full play to religious experience of the soul in quite a different manner from the restrained objectivity of the earlier Tractarians. Anyone who has attended an Anglo-Catholic mission will have found difficulty in distinguishing it from a Salvation Army mission, except for a few externals which we are told do not really matter. Psychology has come to the aid of theology, and the words of Wm. James have been fully realized :

'What keeps religion going is something else than abstract definitions and systems of concatenated adjectives, and something different from faculties of theology, and their Professors. All these things are after-effects, secondary accretions upon those phenomena of vital conversation with the Unseen Divine.'[1]

Some writers have strengthened the appeal of the religious urge towards a psychology of religion by their portrayal of Jesus as the first great Psychologist. This has become possible by the long and ceaseless effort of the past decade to picture the Jesus of History as a corrective to the one-sided picture of the Jesus of Theology. Jesus was cognizant of the laws of the mind's harmonious working. He moved from religious experience to dogmatic theology, from within outwards, and was Himself at the heart of the vital springs of the religious consciousness. Barry sees strong similarities

[1] James, p. 447.

between the discoveries of the New Psychology and the work of Christ.

'Indeed,' he says, 'the more one reads, the more the conviction grows that here we have simply in scientific form, reduced to technical term and law and formula, part of the secret of the way in which Our Lord during His ministry dealt with the lives of men and women. More and more, as one reads the well-known books, the old phrases of the New Testament come into the mind again with a new and, I think, very widely enriched meaning.'[1]

Pym has worked this thought out at considerable length and reminds us that 'the Gospel abounds in psychological teaching.'[2] At the same time both writers are anxious to avoid the error of thinking that Jesus can be reduced to the categories of modern Psychology either in His teaching or His practice. But there is no doubt that Psychology has given us another angle from which to see a little more of the wonder of that Divine Life which reaches far beyond the limits of all the sciences but which gains new beauty from them all.

We see, therefore, how inevitable the new approach to Religion has become; we shall see later that it is not only inevitable as a movement of thought but as a method of apologetic against some of its exponents who have, in the ardour of its youth, trespassed beyond the hedges of their own rightful field. Meanwhile, however, we must summarize the materials of our new science. They may be divided into four departments or groups:

(1) The study of our own religious consciousness. This is both limited in range and liable to false interpretation, so that it needs the support of other material in order to make it of value.

[1] Barry, p. 3.

[2] Pym, pp. 11–147; see also pp. 1–88 ff. and 11–143 ff.

(2) Biographies and autobiographies of the Saints, taken over a wide period and from various religions. This corrects the false individualism of (1), but it is not free from the danger that these works are so often the products of abnormal people who cannot speak for the religious experience of the mass of ordinary men and women.

(3) The Questionnaire method. This has been found helpful in extending the scope of inquiry to ordinary as well as extraordinary souls. A series of carefully chosen questions, intended to draw forth facts of experience and not merely opinions about certain ideas and doctrines, are sent to representatives of every Church, vocation and age, and to both sexes. Dr. Starbuck used this method in New York for his researches on 'Conversion'; Leuba used it in order to find out the percentage of scientific workers who believed in God and Immortality; Pratt used it for the foundational roots of the belief in God. In the last case the question sent out was: 'Why do you believe in God?' and 367 replies were received from all types of people. While, therefore, this method does away with some defects of the others it leaves its subjects to interpret their own religious experience in their own way and therefore needs very careful handling. In reply to Pratt's question, for example, there were 30 per cent who replied that they had 'reasoned it out.' A great deal more evidence would need to be collected before this could be pronounced satisfactory. The Questionnaire method, therefore, needs careful scrutiny.

(4) A classification and comparison of the religious ideas and customs and literatures of the whole religious life of man, Christian and non-Christian. Comparative religion came to the aid of Psychology just at the critical moment in such a stupendous work as *The Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics*. All sacred books and mythologies must be included in this

group of material, and no aspiration of man after God must be regarded as unworthy of consideration. 'We must examine the strange writings of the erotic mystics and the wilder American revivals with the same scientific respect as we show to the services of mattins and evensong in the established church.'[1] Or in the words of Pratt:

'The Psychologist will be justified in making use of any material that seems to him promising. He will probe the most sacred depths of the private experience of individuals as thoroughly as he can; he will ransack the public records of social religious practices and common religious ideas; and the results of these various investigations he will describe, compare and generalize as completely as possible.'[2]

When the materials are collected the great question remains as to the sense in which a Psychology of Religion can be called a science. In the hierarchy of the sciences we see this young daughter of Philosophy acting at present with the assurance of a typical modern woman. She has been set free from her neighbours, Biology and Physiology, on the one hand, and Æsthetics, Philosophy and Theology on the other. But she must carefully regard her own weaknesses and limitations. First, she must know her office, which is to describe and co-ordinate mental processes and not to explain them. Directly she attempts to answer the question, 'Why! she usurps the duties of her mother, Philosophy' (see Scott Holland, *Creed and Critics*, p. 14). Secondly, she must recognize the peculiar nature of her raw material. The transition in the scientific mind when it passes from the external objects of Nature to the inner recesses of personality is very violent. The mind looks up or out to see the stars or Nature, but it has to turn in upon itself to see mental pro-

[1] Thouless, p. 6. [2] Pratt, p. 32.

cesses at work. Apart altogether from the preliminary difficulty as to whether anyone is capable of giving an accurate record of a mental process in the continuous flux of the mind there is a large element of subjectivity involved in every record of psychological experience. It is quite true that this can be largely overcome by taking many personal experiences from many religions and by limiting oneself in evidence of a purely personal nature to people like Augustine, Teresa, Fox, Tyrrell and others who were most likely to give a more or less accurate record of their experiences. But it is a serious limitation to Psychology as an exact science. Thirdly, there are immense gaps in the raw material itself. The greatest gap is found in our total ignorance of the experience of what is known as 'the transcendental ego'; it lies entirely outside the range of our powers of introspection or observation. When we speak of mental processes in psychology we mean the experience of the 'empirical ego,' which is that part of us which comes within the range of our introspection or observation. The difficulty is due to the fact that the two egos are dissected for study but never in reality. In fact they cannot be fully understood apart from each other. When, for example, the process of Conversion is set down in terms of psychology there is much more to be said. Without the transcendental side of the process the mere psychological explanation of it 'is an extremely crude theory, and cannot certainly be accepted as a fully adequate account of the process.'[1] There are some things which happened at Pentecost, such as the projection of cloven tongues from the Unconscious, which can be stated in psychological terms, but there are other factors which could not be so described. That is why

[1] Dr. Wm. Brown in *Science, Religion and Reality* (edit. Needham, 1926), p. 307.

'Woodbine Willie' warns us of the limitations of Psychology as a whole, in his poem 'The Psychologist':

'He takes the saints to pieces,
And labels all the parts,
He tabulates the secrets
Of loyal loving hearts.
He probes their selfish passion,
And shows exactly why
The Martyr goes out singing
To suffer and to die.
The Beatific Vision,
That brings them to their knees,
He smilingly reduces
To infant phantasies.
The Freudian Unconscious
Quite easily explains
The splendour of their sorrows,
The pageant of their pains.
The manifold temptations,
Wherewith the flesh can vex
The saintly soul, are samples
Of Œdipus complex.
The subtle sex perversion,
His eagle glance can tell,
That makes their joyous heaven
The horror of their hell.
His reasoning is perfect,
His proofs as plain as paint,
He has but one small weakness,
He cannot make a saint.'

STUDDERT-KENNEDY, *Lighten our Darkness*.

Even when we are dealing with the 'empirical ego' there are still gaps in the chain of cause and effect. Various bridges or 'hypothetical entities ' have been invented to span them like 'The Unconscious' and 'The Censor' and the 'Complex.' These do not exist in reality but help us to continue our researches until something better is found. It would be unfair, however, to leave the matter here. There is no science outside mathematics where gaps are not to be discovered. Science is like an archipelago rather than an island; it is not a completely finished system. And therefore the same assertion can be made against physics or chemistry as against psychology, that it is impossible to make absolutely accurate predictions and to see the connections of all the facts within the sciences. Such mysteries as 'the Atom,' 'the Electron,' and 'the Ether' are in no sense real entities. And therefore the Psychology of Religion, if it keeps itself within its lawful province, is justified in its title to be a science. It describes the data of human experience so far as they are connected with religion, and endeavours to ascertain the relations between them. If we want the mathematical conception of science we have to deny the claims of Psychology to such a title and to accept the estimate of Mobius in his work *The Hopelessness of all Psychology* (*Die Hoffnungslosigkeit aller Psychologie*), but if we accept the looser definition 'so as to cover any systematic description of the verifiable facts of human experience,' with varying degrees of exactness and prediction, we shall acknowledge that Psychology is 'a genuine, though not a very exact science.'[1]

At present, Psychology needs much discipline to break down the subjectivity of its records and to fill up its numerous gaps with connecting thoughts. But it is a working science with large pragmatic values to which we must now turn.

[1] Pratt, p. 29.

Of these values first and foremost we place the lesson that religion is natural to mankind. We shall see in the course of this book that man has always reacted to the universe in a religious way; his intimate self demanded it. Long before there were priests and medicine men and interested parties he was compelled to make peace with the gods. There was no need even of a supernatural endowment to produce this reaction; that would come later and crown his natural need; at first, it was the cry of perfectly natural instincts for 'Mana.' What a recent writer wrote on Prayer might well have been written on religion in general:

'Think of the fundamental meaning of human life – reduce it to its simplest elements, and what you find is desire – appetite, impulse, curiosity – the urge of Bernard Shaw, the *élan vital* of Bergson, the *libido* of the Psychoanalysts. Man is a bundle of desires, and *desire* is prayer in the raw. Man desires air and light, drink and food. He desires love and knowledge, and these desires are unconscious prayers akin to the cries of the young lions in the wide desert places roaring to God for their food. These desires often crawl when they ought to climb. They stop short when they ought to reach their destined goal. The rivers often lose themselves in the sand and fail to reach the eternal sea. But in spite of all this it is an undisputed fact that man is a creation of desires, and therefore potentially a creature of prayer. Prayer is human – as human as desire – the raw material of humanity itself.'[1]

Secondly, the Psychology of Religion has a purifying effect upon religious experience. It bears a similar relation to religion that medicine and surgery bear towards health. They are not the life, but they are the servants of life.

[1] Rev. Thos. Phillips at the Mürren Conference, September 1924, *The Review of the Churches*, January, 1925, p. 80.

'The physician who goes through the body with scalpel and microscope does a service to the living human being who rejoices in his strength and pulsing life. Psychology is to religion what the science of medicine is to health, or what the study of botany is to the appreciation of plants. The relation is the same as that of any science to its corresponding art. It is art coming to comprehend itself for its own betterment.'[1]

We have to distinguish carefully between true and false religious experience by the help which psychology affords. In certain so-called revivals, for example, there are emotional experiences awakened by mass suggestion of a very doubtful kind. The hypnotic powers of the preacher, who uses various contrivances of monotonous repetition, of fixed phrases and the combined singing of stirring hymns, lead to crying, screaming, speaking with tongues, and similar emotional states. We are not surprised that such revivals do not last. Starbuck shows that 60 per cent fall away in the first six weeks, while in the case of ordinary Church instruction only 20 per cent fall away. It must not be thought, however, that all revivals are of this sort; but we are warned that any revival which trusts to suggestion and mass emotion for its success instead of in the present Grace of God in Christ as the centre of hope for the struggling sinner is foredoomed to failure, however striking its outward manifestations may be in the eyes of men. Similar warning is given to us with regard to the morbid teaching on sin in a certain section of the Church, and the attempt to produce in adolescents a form of conversion to type. We shall see that there are many types of conversion, and to make children who have been brought up under Christian influences pass through the same 'storm

[1] Starbuck, p. 8.

and stress' as a Bunyan or a St. Paul must obviously defeat its own end. The mind of the child rebels.

Thirdly, the Psychology of Religion has large social value. 'It ministers to charity as other branches of study minister to faith.'[1] It stands for a peculiar temper or outlook which springs from a close scrutiny of the origins and conditions of religious experience and belief. It is entirely opposed to the seriousness without knowledge and charity which was the mark of the Church of the Reformation and which split into fragments the Reformed Church itself. It makes for

'a faith that is warm but without fanaticism, reasonable but not coldly abstract, courageous but never self-deceived nor disloyal to the truth, calmly confident but never blind, and neither slavishly servile to authority nor yet lonely and separatist.'[2]

Fourthly, it has revolutionized the religious education of children. It was once thought that every child was to be regarded by its teacher as a full-grown adult, needing one fixed kind of spiritual medicine to put its soul in order. That idea has gone for ever. The child passes through phases of psychological development along well defined lines, and each phase must be met by an appropriate approach.

'The time is almost past when we entrust our children in school to a teacher who does not know something of psychology. A religious teacher cannot stand between a hungering soul and its future self, or between men and God, who does not know something of the laws of spiritual evolution, who does not know at every step something of where the life is, whither it is tending, and the means by which it is to attain its end.'[3]

[1] R. H. Thouless, *Expository Times*, pp. 35 – 409.
[2] Pratt, p. 223. [3] Starbuck, pp. 8, 9.

This is the basis of the graded system in the modern Sunday-school.[1] We cannot enter into details, but it is easy to see that the change which Psychology has produced will mean the passing of the mass Sunday-school and the rise of the departmental Sunday-school; school buildings in the future will have to be built so as to arrange for the three grades of scholars (5 to 8 years, 8 to 12 years, and 12 to 16 years). The types of hymns and prayers will differ in each grade and the lessons will vary from the concrete story-telling in the lowest grade to the abstract questions of right and wrong which command the attention of boys and girls in the upper grade as they grow in self-consciousness and individuality.

Lastly, there is the contribution of Psychology to the Pastoral Office of the Clergy. It is impossible to deal with souls without a good knowledge of psychological processes. There are numerous penitents unable to find rest because of some pathological condition, and it is of enormous advantage to be able to track down the particular perversion in the instinctive life which is causing trouble to the sufferer. Where there is a morbid sense of sin there is generally some psychological cause, which it is important to discover. And criminal tendencies which are often due to false training in the home may be considerably modified by right psychological treatment. It is just as important for a penitent to be taught to know himself as to receive Absolution. Preaching and teaching are also more effective when they are supported by a wise use of psychological principles. As the local preacher explained in justification of his recent expense on a course of Psychology: 'You must know what's IN 'em before you can get AT 'em,' (the congregation or class).

For these reasons a psychology of religion is one of the

[1] Cf. Luther: 'In schools of all kinds the chief and most common lesson should be the Scriptures and for young boys the Gospel.'

greatest needs of to-day; but, on the other hand, there is danger lest we make a religion of psychology. And here we must emphasize what we said in the discussion of Psychology as a science. Psychology must keep its hands off theology. After all it is only the handmaid of theology, the outer court of the Temple and not the Temple itself. When all its raw material has been classified we have to ask a further and more important question: 'What does it mean?' 'What is its value?' And these are not psychological questions at all. Psychology can trace the mental experiences in a man's conversion but not why he was converted; it can examine the experiences of a man who feels the presence of God but not the cause of that presence.

'Psychology, being a natural science, can say, "Here are certain beliefs, attitudes, emotions, and other psychic phenomena, found in certain persons at certain times, under certain conditions. I guarantee that they are carefully observed, classified and formulated under convenient generalizations." Pure Psychology cannot tell us why a man is converted, or whether his claim to know God is true. Psychology cannot settle the historical problem: Did Jesus Christ live or did He not? Nor can it settle the theological problem: If He did, was He God Incarnate?' [1]

The Philosopher and Theologian have a different task from the Psychologist, and, in one sense, a more sacred task because it takes them nearer the heart of the great secret than the Psychologist ever dare venture to approach.

Some of the conclusions of Psychologists who have trespassed into the field of the Theologian are interesting and serious enough to call for attention. Freud believes that religion is a superstition, a projection of our subjective self

[1] Balmforth, p. 83.

and best represented by a dog chasing his own tail. 'I believe,' he says, 'that a large proportion of the mythological conception of the world which reaches far into the most modern religions is nothing but psychology projected into the outer world – we venture to explain in this way the myths of Paradise, the Fall of Man, of God, of Good and Evil, of Immortality and the like, i.e. to transform metaphysics into metapsychology.' Jung says: 'The Book of Job shows us God at work both as Creator and Destroyer. Who is this God? A thought which humanity in every part of the world and in all ages has brought forth from itself and always again anew in similar forms.' These are not new theories; they are old theories on new foundations. But they are so destructive that we must face them at once. The thoroughness of this modern attack on religion is found in the words of the sceptic who said: 'Religion hitherto has been wounded by Science, upon the surface of the skin only. It has been reserved for Psychology to enter the arena and to deliver the death-blow. When the combat is ended we shall hear no more of God, or the soul or of religion; all the apparatus of religion will be scrapped, and mankind, freed from the incubus of false beliefs, will march to the conquest of the universe.'

Is God a Projection? In other words, if we could destroy all the people who believe in God, should we destroy God? We have already seen that Psychology cannot affirm or deny the existence of God; that power belongs to other departments of Knowledge. It can only show us how our minds work in the discovery of the idea of God. And Psychology is right when it affirms that the idea of God is a Projection; that is why ideas of God vary in the different religions and, within limits, among individuals. But it is more than a Projection: 'the idea of God meets the fact of God.' Subjective differences are due to our limitations in aspiring towards

God. But God exists as an Objective Reality to meet our human needs.

Imagine what would happen if we were to accept the theory propounded by Freud and Jung. Religion would cease immediately man discovered it was an illusion of his own brain. But it continues because there is an ideal Reality to which it can cling. The Objectivity of Nature, Goodness, Beauty, Truth would all perish according to this theory, for they too would be illusions; but we go on thinking and believing in these values still. That great system of 'The Order of Nature' which we are endeavouring year by year to build has an essential existence apart from any projection of the human mind.

There is more to be said. If the idea of God is nothing more than a projection it is capable of being removed by Psychoanalysis, and Analysis along the lines of removing it should make men less religious.

'One would expect, according to this theory,' says Dr. Brown, 'that deep analysis would leave the patient less religious than he was before. My own experience has been the exact opposite of this. After an analysis (for scientific purposes) by a leading Psychoanalyst extending over ninety-two hours my religious convictions were stronger than before, not weaker. The analysis had indeed a purifying effect upon my religious feelings, freeing them from much that was merely infantile and supported by sentimental associations or historical accidents. But the ultimate result has been that I have become more convinced than ever that religion is the most important thing in life and that it is essential to mental health. [1]

The idea of God is more than a Projection. We shall see

[1] Science, Religion and Reality, p. 311.

later that it cannot be contained in such a simple formula as that laid down by Freud and Jung.[1]

The truth is that Psychology has not the power to destroy or to build up religion by its own weapons. Other questions have to be considered and the Christian has a right to ask that the Psychologist shall show some signs of having really faced the significance of the spiritual experience of 2,000 years. He must face the fact that, in spite of much delusion, wrong attitudes to science, and differences of opinion on doctrine, there has been a fundamental experience of God common to men and women of all nations and conditions.

'We might trace Christian unanimity across nineteen centuries from a Cilician Rabbinist to some farmer or doctor, churchwarden in an English village church to-day – if only simple peasants or childlike savages were concerned the suggestion theory might be more plausible. But why should Baron von Hügel or the Dean of St. Paul's chase the same phantom as the Basuto or the Korean, and never see that it is a phantom?'[2]

These are questions which Psychologists cannot answer, but if they venture to try to answer them they must take cognizance of facts which are outside their range.

We have purposely shown the weaknesses of the psychological method in relation to religion to prevent any misconception as to its scope and value. We would advise the reader to turn back and re-read the passage on the Values of a Psychology of Religion and to ask himself whether they are not sufficient to merit a thoughtful attention to this new and developing subject.

[1] Page 130. [2] Balmforth, p. 109.

CHAPTER TWO

THE PSYCHOLOGICAL ROOTS OF RELIGION

All religions point to a consciousness of ideas, phenomena and relations which imply the existence of another world alongside the world of matter. And the first problem of Psychology is to find the germinal or most primitive form of the religious consciousness. Tylor propounded a theory in his *Primitive Culture* (1871) known as Animism, according to which Primitive man was said to have read his own personal experience of a soul life into the outer world. Dreams, trance, and death suggested to him that the trees, mountains, brooks, clouds, stones and stars had a quasi-material ghost soul within them. All nature was alive with innumerable spirits and the earliest attempts at establishing a relation with these spirits were the root foundations of the religious consciousness. But Tylor was an anthropologist and did not ask the further question as to what were the inner forces within Primitive man which made him seek a religious adjustment with the world at all. Was there any power within man that demanded this adjustment? Then again, the idea of soul implied in this theory could not be developed early. The notion of a soul as a distinct thing is a fairly advanced concept which must have been beyond the mental reach of Primitive man. And he could not await the discovery of this notion before he began to worship and to pray. We must travel nearer the source of the stream of the religious consciousness, and attempt to find a more universal, unsophisticated attitude of Primitive man to account for his religious attitude to his environment.

This attitude has been defined as a sense of awe in the presence of a diffused, indefinable, mysterious power or powers

not regarded as personal, and known by different terms as Orenda, Wakonda and Manitu among North American tribes; Hasina in Madagascar; and Baraka in North Africa. Since Dr. Codrington published his book on the 'Melanesians' (1891) it has been known to scholars by the less cumbrous term 'Mana.'

'All conspicuous success is a proof that a man has Mana – a man's power, though political or social in character, is his Mana. If a man has been successful in fighting, it has not been his natural strength of arm, quickness of eye, or readiness of resource that has won success; he has certainly got the Mana of a spirit or of a deceased warrior to empower him, conveyed in an amulet or a stone around his neck, or a tuft of leaves in his belt – or in the form of words with which he brings supernatural assistance to his side; a canoe will not be swift unless Mana be brought to bear upon it, a wind will not catch many fish, nor an arrow inflict a mortal wound.'[1]

This attitude may well lead to an animistic point of view, but it is more primitive, and has been called by Dr. Marett by a similar and yet different name – 'Animatism.'

The two theories are alike in emphasizing the unique nature of the religious adjustment to the external world. Primitive man was always different from the animals in that he found a meaning in his environment and tried to regulate his life accordingly. It does not matter how crude the adjustment is at first or how false and childish it may become; the thing is that man is so constituted that he cannot help being religious; he has always felt things are not what they seem; the history of the process of adjustment is the history of

[1] Codrington quoted D. M. Edwards, *The Philosophy of Religion*, p. 45.

religion. But they differ in their explanation of the nature of this adjustment in its most primitive form. One implies a philosopher-savage; the other emphasizes the emotional content of the adjustment, and it is with this that modern Psychology has specially concerned itself, by asking the question, What is the inner force which demanded this adjustment? And to the answer to this question we must now turn.

Man has always been governed by a threefold movement of forces within his personality – one from without, one from above, and one from beneath. That from without comes from environment along the afferent nerves to the brain, and is known by the collective name Perception. That from above originates in the higher levels of mind and is known as Conception; that which comes from beneath is common to the whole animal creation and is known by the name Instinct. In Primitive man the instinctive forces were predominant, and we must pay some attention to their significance.

The importance of the instincts cannot be overestimated. They are hereditary and we each possess them all. It is probable that since the arrival of man on this planet these innate tendencies have been common to every race and age. It is true that at first they are latent and emerge in each life gradually and in a fairly regular cycle; it is also true that some people seem to lack certain instincts, but on further investigation we find that this fact is only apparent. When we say that a man is without fear or a woman without pride we merely mean that these instincts are repressed or dormant. A man may repress his fear under a pretence of great bravado; a woman may find her instinct of pride held down by a stronger instinct of self-abasement. The important thing is that Primitive man had just the same instincts as Modern man.

We need not describe all the instincts, but it is necessary

to deal with those which seem to have a religious significance. The instinct of self-preservation, with its accompanying emotion of fear, appears very early in the child's life. At first it shows itself in a shrinking from the object of fear and in a cry which the mother can distinguish from those of anger or bodily discomfort. When the locomotor apparatus of the child's body is developed the shrinking turns into flight and concealment. The best time to watch its earliest manifestation is on the first introduction of a child to a cat or a dog or to the noise of wind or thunder. There is no doubt that fear is the most haunting of all the emotions and has played a great part in the history of the race.

When a child begins to ask questions another instinct is forcing its way into activity – the instinct of curiosity with its emotion of wonder. At 6 or 7 years, children are the plague of their parents. The wide range of their questions from, Who made me? to, Who made God? shows the force behind this emotion.

Another instinct which we must notice is known as negative self-feeling, with its accompanying emotion of self-abasement. It is seen actively at work in the shirking, crest-fallen behaviour, slow movement and hanging head of those under its power. It is different from fear, in which the subject takes refuge in flight. Rather it produces a general feeling of inferiority.

We need not trouble about the rest of the instincts as they do not immediately concern us. What we have to remember is that in real life the instincts never reveal themselves in this separatist and simple manner. They are always found organized into groups or sentiments. Every sentiment has a life history in which certain instincts are grouped round some central idea or ideal like Home, Country, Friends, Social Causes, Money, Business, or God. There are thousands of

possible combinations; but we are now concerned with the grouping of the instincts round the primitive conception of Mana, or with the earliest manifestation of the religious sentiment.

We have selected the instincts which the best Psychologists believe to have been grouped into the earliest stages of man's religious adjustment. As McDougall says: 'The emotions that play a principal part in religious life are admiration, awe and reverence – admiration is a fusion of wonder and negative self-feeling – awe is a fusion of admiration with fear – reverence is awe blended with tender emotion.' If it is true that the child repeats the history of the race, it is remarkable how closely the religious attitude of a small child resembles in origin the attitude of wonder and awe which seems to be the foundation of the religious adjustment of Primitive man. I have carefully watched the religious development of two small children, who have both been nurtured under the same conditions. One was keen about her prayers from the moment she could utter consecutive speech; the other had one eye open at grace and both eyes open at prayers. One loved to carry her Bible to school and would say to her mother, 'There is only one thing that I love better than you, Mother, and that is my Bible'; the other found no interest in her Bible or in anything connected with it. In general life one would begin the day by counting the fears of failure at school, or the dangers of big boys on the road; the other would rise with a song and run in the presence of motor-cars or of bicycles without the slightest sense of danger; the one would ask questions about everything in the yard, house and street; the other would be quite content to ride her tricycle, or build a castle, or walk in the park; one would shrink from strangers and never cause her teachers the slightest trouble by her force of self-assertion;

the other gave her teachers a difficult time and greeted all strangers at the door, from a rogue to a doctor, without a qualm. One possessed emphatic instincts of fear, curiosity and negative self-feeling; the other of pugnacity and positive self-feeling. It looks therefore that, before the development of Reason or of Will, in the earliest ages, that Primitive man reacted towards the universe in a religious way under the powerful stimulus of those emotions attached to the instincts of fear, curiosity and negative self-feeling. The tender instinct is a somewhat later addition to the religious sentiment.

There have been other less satisfactory explanations of the compelling force which drives humanity towards God. The American School of Erotogenesists find it in the sex instinct. Theodore Schroeder says that 'all religion in its beginning is a mere misinterpretation of sex ecstasy, and the religion of to-day is only the essentially unchanged evolutionary product of psycho-sexual perversion.' And Swisher goes further in ascribing to Christianity the same root. 'The law upon which Jesus founded His Gospel,' he says, 'love of God and fellow man, appears late in man's religious development, and then as the logical and natural outgrowth of primitive sex-love.' It is true that the language of religion is the language of love, and that religious excitement passes easily into sex licence; that conversion occurs very frequently in adolescence when the sex instinct is rapidly developing; but it would be rash to make this instinct the primary source of religion in face of the investigations into early religions and of child psychology. There is more awe and reverence than sex in the earliest reaction of man to his surroundings, and the religion of the little child is as far removed from sex as the poles. Trotter is inclined to trace the origin of religion in the herd instinct, in view of the social side of religion in common

ceremonial acts and mass revivals, while Elliot, Smith and Perry turn wistfully to the instinct of self-preservation, exhibiting itself in a longing for immortality, for the source. But here again theories seem to be out of all relation to psychological fact. We need not, however, be afraid of finding the origin of religion in any of these mundane recesses; religion is known by its fruits and not by its roots. All we must secure is a theory in most accord with scientific fact.

However, all these theories are allied in two things. First, that the earliest religious adjustment is an emotional one, that it begins in that part of personality which we know as Feeling; and secondly, that the old idea of a religious instinct or faculty must be abandoned. The reason is that no such instinct has been revealed in psychological investigation.

'There is no separate element of man's psychological nature that can be labelled specifically religious. There is no instinct or faculty or emotion or any psychic element which can be described as religious in the sense that it is not found in the non-religious or secular type of experience – the ultimate elements of human nature are the same in saint and sensualist; the difference lies in the organizing principle or purpose.' [1]

It is quite possible, however, that what Thouless says is true, that all the instincts are sublimated before they perform a religious use:

'From the point of view of the Instinct Theory,' he writes, 'religion may be described as a mode of adaptation to life which provides possibilities of sublimation of all the instinctive cravings which find on earth only incomplete satisfaction or none at all.' [2]

[1] Edwards, p. 62.

[2] *Expository Times*, 35, p. 409.

In our attempt to discover the primitive and unsophisticated religious attitude of Primitive man we must remember that this is only the trickle of a stream at its source. Otherwise we are enclosed in a net of determinism which condemns a great mass of humanity to an inability to see God, or at least, where the instincts that comprise the religious sentiment are weak or perverted, to a serious religious handicap. There is much more to follow. However slender the stream, there are tributaries waiting to fill it into a great river. Every child has a feeble or strong nucleus of the instincts named above; and from this nucleus there is a gradual assimilation of the whole personality as it develops – Feeling, Thought and Will – into the religious adjustment. All the instincts are taken up into the stream. That is the element of truth in all the attempts to base religion on one particular instinct; the error is in not going far enough towards the source. Every instinct as it develops is capable of being sublimated into the religious personality. Then follow the higher levels of consciousness at a later development in both the race and the child; they bend themselves Godward like the priests who offer sacrifice, directing the instincts by definitely conceived ideals, to the glory of God and the benefit of mankind. Nothing less than this will satisfy the all-embracing nature of a fully-developed religious consciousness. It begins in a nucleus of primitive instincts and ends by including the whole man, Feeling, Thought and Will. The race and the individual are always somewhere behind the full attainment of this ideal.

The tendency to-day is to make religious feeling the chief subject of the Psychology of Religion. But that means that we are to limit ourselves to a portion and only a small and primitive portion of the religious consciousness. Mere feelings are easily excited by the use of drugs as well as by certain

forms of disease, as the lives of Mahomet and Dostoieffsky, both epileptics, testify. The wild orgies, dancing and feastings of primitive religions, as well as the corybantic forms of some modern religious revivals, show a truncated religious outlook. If feeling becomes an end in itself and is allowed to take the dwelling deserted by an evil spirit, it soon opens the door to seven worse spirits and defiles the whole house. If it manages to survive it is only by closing the doors and windows of the house and by nursing itself in sentimental satisfaction while the world outside starves for service. Feeling is an essential element of religion, but it must be supported by reason and will.

'The throne of the Godhead is the mind of Man' (Macarius). 'Reverence God in thyself, for God is more in the mind of man than in any part of the world beside' (Whichcote). There is a continuous need of bringing experience to the test of reason. Nothing can be communicated until it is put into thought; Theology is the attempt to make religious experience communicable. We need reason to decide between true and false beliefs, between Christian and pagan ideas, between truths and half-truths. Thought needs experience to save it from senility or death, but experience needs thought to save it from evaporation.

'If the history of religions can be trusted to teach us anything at all upon the subject,' says Pratt in discussing the relation of Reason and Imagination in *The Idea of God*, 'it shows clearly that the development of rational thought, seeking to make its world consistent, and to avoid the consciously incongruous, has played a more important rôle than any other one thing in making older ideas of God incredible and in developing new and genuinely vital beliefs. The whole story of the development of monotheism and the growth of

the moral conception of the Deity has been largely determined by a kind of implicit logic – a sense of dissatisfaction with the incongruous.' [1]

Will is also essential to a complete religious consciousness. It translates feeling and belief into action. If it is pitted against the Intellect it has no guide, aim or direction. Mere Will, if that were possible, would lead to worship, creeds, symbols, vestments and hymn-singing of the same species as the ceremonies and ritual of a pagan temple. They would have no intelligent basis.

'Many a modern Catholic,' according to Pratt, 'bases his faith in the authority of the Church ultimately upon his wish to believe in the Church. A striking and rather melancholy illustration of this is to be found in the long struggle of that rare spirit, George Tyrrell, who with all his love for Catholicism was too clear in self-analysis and too ingenuous in expression to pretend that it was reasoning that led him to Rome. "I felt," he writes, concerning his conversion to Catholicism, "I felt it would be Rome or nothing. I knew dimly that I had not any real faith in Rome – only a great wish that I could believe – a wish that some of the grosser obstacles were non-existent; I was tempted to do what I knew or suspected would be internally dishonest." And looking back at his long attempt to be a good Jesuit, he confesses: "Sometimes I think it must be said that, in the deepest depths of my self-consciousness, I believe nothing at all, and am self-deceived in the matter; and the recognition of the manner in which I have all along allowed the 'wish to believe' to play upon me rather confirms this melancholy hypothesis." ' [2]

[1] Pratt, p. 204.

[2] Pratt, p. 218.

The action of mere will makes God at best a Great Lawgiver and at worst a Supreme Bogyman, driving all His children to obedience by subtle or open threats. The Will cannot, however, be neglected. Questions of religion are too vast to be settled with perfect demonstration; we must act or be lost; but our action must be based on the best we can discover, and Reason must save Will from straying in deserts where there are no roads, signposts or milestones.

Another important factor must be mentioned in connection with the religious consciousness. We have not said anything about the outer influences on spiritual personality, in the shape of social and traditional influences. They have a great place in every religion. The herd instinct and the instinctive tendencies of imitation and suggestion bid them welcome to the religious consciousness, so that even the most sacred and intimate of religious experiences is not unconditioned. Certain forms of religious conversion become the recognized thing in some circles; the repetition of shibboleths and fixed phrases and the confident manner of the preacher along with the ejaculations and hymn-singing of a great congregation increase the force of suggestibility. It would be a good thing if people would stop sometimes to think out how much of their religion was due to social influences and how much to their individual thought. The power of Tradition is even stronger than that of present social conditions. That is why religions are reckoned among the most conservative forces in the world. The sacredness of the authority from which they have come and the sacredness of the channel through which they have been mediated to us, through our parents, elders, or through society itself, as well as the power of Habit, account for this. But there are numerous instances where a false interpretation of an idea generated from a most sacred source has been set right by

the initiative of an individual. The history of the Noble Army of Martyrs is a record of appeal to individual conscience, or to an immediate personal relation to God, as over against the formal, the traditional, the organized religious customs and doctrines of their age. It is an interesting fact that customs are more tenacious than beliefs because they belong more completely to the community. Thoughts are hidden; actions are seen; and the 'freethinker' goes on his way unnoticed; whereas a breach of custom turns the little world to which it belongs upside down at once. A curious example is given by Hoffding:

'In a Dutch village church the custom of bowing when passing a certain spot in the church wall was maintained into the nineteenth century, but no one knew the reason for this until, on the whitewash being scraped away, a picture of the Madonna was found on the wall: thus the custom had outlived the catholicism which prompted it by 300 years; it was a part of the old cult which had maintained itself.' [1]

Lastly, we must not forget the vital part of the personality which has been known by various names but which we shall call 'The Unconscious Mind.' It is the storehouse of memory, wishes, impressions, repressions, and may at any time discharge its energy into our conscious selves. When we close our eyes and ears, and shut off our other senses from the outer world, we are conscious of an inner life made up of the elements just named.

'Much of the content of this larger background against which our conscious being stands out in relief is insignificant. Imperfect memories, silly jingles, inhibitive timidities, "dissolutive" phenomena of various sorts, as Myers calls them,

[1] Pratt, p. 83.

enter into it for a large part. But in it many of the performances of genius seem also to have their origin.'[1]

In spite of the mixed nature of the contents of the Unconscious, we know that it plays a great part in the religious life of the individual. Religious ideas and feelings are stored up there; the memory of some words of Scripture or verse of a hymn or a stirring event may, under stress of deep religious emotion, burst forth into strange forms in the conscious life.

Experiences with anæsthetic subjects, experiments in post-hypnotic suggestion, and with those pathological cases which Freud, Prince, Sidis and others have made so familiar, where a buried complex produces various psychical disturbances – experiments of these and other types show much the same sort of sudden rise of ideas, convictions and emotions not to be accounted for by the normal consciousness, as is to be found in the Conversion of St. Paul or of Alfonse Ratisbonne. This incubation or cerebration in the Unconscious accounts for many conversions and for visions of a special kind as well as for many other forms of religious experience.

We have now seen the grand scope and manifold complexity of the religious consciousness. Its beginning is instinctive, its development needs the panoply of personality. We may best summarize this chapter in the words of Thouless:

'Historically and Psychologically, religion is a complex growth from many conflicting and diverse elements. Man's sexuality and his egoism; his craving for power, his sentimentality ; his awe in the presence of the mighty forces of nature, his fear of death and his love for the dead, his reverence for custom and traditional beliefs, and his rebellion against them, have all alike contributed to the system of

[1] James, p. 512.

beliefs and feelings that he has woven round the objects of his religious beliefs. The true path of the Psychologist of religion is not to select one of these numerous roots and say that it is the essential element underlying religion. He must rather investigate them all, recognizing the different parts they all play in the formation of the complex system of beliefs, sentiments and rites we call "religion." '[1]

'All thought begins in feeling wide
In the great mass its base is hid,
And, narrowing up to thought, stands glorified,
A moveless Pyramid.

'Nor is he far astray who deems
That every hope which rises and grows broad
In the world's heart, by ordered impulse streams
From the great heart of God.'

LOWELL, 'An Incident in a Railroad Car.'

[1] Thouless in *Expository Times*, 35, p. 410.

CHAPTER THREE

THE RELIGION OF THE CHILD AND OF THE ADOLESCENT

THERE has been no cessation in the study of child life since the earlier half of the nineteenth century, when the conscience of England and of the world was roused by the horrors of the factory system. We cannot conceive the attitude of those who allowed young children, boys and girls, to deform their bodies and ruin their morals for the sake of material gain. The evidence before the Sadler Committee which drove the chairman to write the mournful poem, 'The Factory Girl's Last Day,' was sufficient to awaken the most sluggish conscience. And from that moment the body, mind and soul of the child have received an increasing share of attention. It might, in fact, be said that our modern interests are always in the next generation. Our Health Committees, Education Committees and Sunday School Associations are outward signs of this attitude.

With this change there has developed a serious attempt to understand the approach of a child to Religion and to enter the secrets of a child's view of God. No one should venture to make this attempt unless he has first of all felt the fascination of children and of their ways. The way to approach the mass of material which a child supplies on this subject is not by way of an observer only but by way of parental sympathy. The child's soul is silent to those who only come to spy. We must first feel the child's joy in life, his growing wonder, his ceaseless activity, the romance of his first words and first struggles, his splendid and sincere gratitude for all that is done to help him in his difficulties. We must share his quaint opinions without ridicule; we must accept his relations to outside objects as true; if he feels that

a book is to be eaten or to be valued for its colour or its pictures or for its big letters or for its stories we must be content to accept his direction. If he has peculiarities different from other children; if he is abashed or unabashed before visitors, a leader or a hanger-back at games, jovial or serious, we must be led by him if we want to reach his soul. It is a question as to whether our highly specialized modern system does not rob us of this human approach to the child; and it is a warning to those who, thinking children a burden to their nerves or a hindrance to their pleasures, have handed them over to others for spiritual or moral training. We must enter on the study of child-religion with a sense of the wonder and glory of their little lives.

'And these I see – these sparkling eyes,
These stores of mystic meaning, these young lives
Building, equipping like a fleet of ships, immortal ships,
Soon to sail out over the measureless seas
On the soul's voyage.
Only a lot of boys and girls?
Only the tiresome spelling, writing and ciphering classes,
Only a public school?
Ah, more, infinitely more.'

WHITMAN.

It is only when we have reached this attitude of sympathetic wonder that we can go further into the soul of a child.

It seems futile to try to decide between the contention of the biologists and materialists that the child is merely a healthy animal, and the poets and philosophers who are inclined to look on him as an angel fresh from the presence of God. The important problem is to ascertain the line of development taken by the religious consciousness in the

child. We have already seen that the nucleus of such a development begins in a few instincts. In other words, religion begins in the emotions and not in the mind; the child is a poet before he is a philosopher. And as a mass of feeling he must be treated.

His religious teachers are those of his social surroundings The child is like soft clay in the hands of the older generation. Customs, attitudes, feelings and ideals are involuntarily copied by him. He is uncritical and passive, almost completely at first and increasingly less as the years pass by. Religion, for him, is therefore caught and not taught. Is there any wonder that our Lord uttered the warning, 'Take heed lest ye offend one of the least of these my little ones.'

Three unconscious psychological processes influence the child's religion. The chief is the religious impressions stored up in the Unconscious Mind. All early incidents, stories, happenings, and mischances are woven into the pattern of that subjective tapestry.

Here is the child's court of final appeal. Here are constituted all his value judgments. Here also is found that precipitate of values which have come down to the infant from parents and grandparents and from the whole experience of his forefathers. This 'feeling mass' will shape and mould the boy's youth. It will colour and modify his whole character.'[1]

That is why first impressions are vital.

> 'The first impressions are immortal all,
> And let mine enemies hoop, cry, roar or call,
> Yet these will whisper if I will but hear
> And penetrate the heart if not the ear.'
>
> TRAHERNE – 'Dumbness.'

[1] Bruce, pp. 46, 47.

The picture of God in a child's mind is always coloured by the emotional setting in which he was accustomed to hear it mentioned. If it was used as a curse, it never loses its ugliness; if as a blessing, it retains its beauty for ever. Some writers have confessed to the associative ideas which their childhood has given to their religion. A. C. Benson says that he 'accepted the fact of God's existence as he accepted the facts of history and geography,' and that God to him was the Jehovah of the Old Testament, unmerciful, hostile, cruel. He had not seen Him as the 'Giver of the simple joys of life – of light and warmth, of food and sleep, as the Creator of curious and sweet-smelling flowers, of toys, etc.' The emotional content of God to him was of one connected with hours of bereavement and sorrow. Such values pass into the Unconscious and are not forgotten; they colour the adult conception and require all the power of self-criticism available for their correction.

This impressionable stage has a lesson for us in connection with the use of parental authority in matters of religion. The child asks no credentials but accepts everything as Gospel Truth. It is our duty to be loyal to that trust, and to charge his mind with nothing which it will have to disgorge at a later period. A picture of God as an indulgent Grandfather, or a cruel Tyrant or a sly Detective may make a child docile to parental wishes for a time; but it will one day be cast on the rubbish heap for the picture of God the strong and loving Father. And the child can no more forget the giver of that early picture than he can forget the person who cheats him by giving him a counterfeit coin. The parent has at last to pay the price.

The best parents need to be reminded that their good intentions are sometimes their worst enemies. When religious authority is asserted too strongly there are two opposite

dangers. A strong child submits so long as he is a 'bundle of feeling' and becomes a rebel when his thought-life develops; the weak child likewise submits in his childhood and becomes a pale imitation of his parents in his youth. 'If my father had dealt wisely with me,' said Boccaccio, 'I might have been among the great poets. But he forced me, in vain, to give my mind to money making, and to such a paying thing as Canon Law. I became neither a man of affairs nor a Canonist and I lost all chance of succeeding in Poetry.' Mr. Bernard Shaw throws the weight of his satire against the obtrusive parent. 'What is a child?' he asks. 'An experiment. A fresh attempt to produce the just man made perfect; that is, to make humanity divine. And you will vitiate the experiment if you make the slightest attempt to abort it into some fancy figure of your own; for example your notion of a good man or a womanly woman. If you treat it as a little wild beast to be tamed, or as a pet to be played with, or even as a means to save you trouble and to make money for you – it may fight its way through in spite of you, and save its soul alive; for all its instincts will resist you, and possibly be strengthened in the resistance; but if you begin with its own holiest aspirations, and suborn them for your own purposes, then there is hardly any limit to the mischief you may do' (Preface to *Misalliance*, p. x). There are thousands of rebels among the children, and tens of thousands of effete religious dummies, produced by parents who have forgotten that education means 'Leading out' (*educo*) and not 'pushing in' religious truth. Parents need to exercise great care in their treatment of that earliest and most dominant instinct of childhood – Fear. It is safe to say that no religious appeal should be made to this instinct in the tenderest years and at no period should it be exploited in the interests of saving trouble. R. L. Stevenson has portrayed

the little child's heart in words which are true of a large majority of children.

'Now my little heart goes beating like a drum
With the breath of the Bogie in my hair;
And all around the candle the crooked shadows come
And go marching along up the stair;
The shadow of the balusters, the shadow of the lamp,
The shadow of the child that goes to bed –
All the wicked shadows coming, tramp, tramp, tramp,
With the black night overhead.'

The miseries endured by children under the exploitation of this instinct cannot be exaggerated.

'This, however, is not proper to the child's natural development. Among normal children, uncontaminated by the morbid fears of their elders, one of the first effects of fear is curiosity. The child instinctively tries to familiarize itself with the strange object or experience, and the familiarity breeds not contempt but confidence and friendliness. It has, for example, often been noticed that children are very interested in the devil and by no means inclined to accept the descriptions given of him by older people. They are rather sorry for him and would like to see him reformed and are quite inclined to be friendly with him without in any way approving of his character or condoning his supposed offences.' [1]

Imitation is a powerful instinctive tendency in the religious life of a child. A parent affirms this fact when he tells his friends 'We must go to church now; you see the children are beginning to notice things.' However powerful the inner urge towards religion may be it can find no outlet except through the use of this instinctive process. In this sense it

[1] Selbie, p. 169.

is like language; ideas are fundamental but their expression depends on the child's power to imitate the words of those around it. A small boy of four years, brought up on the prairie, came to England and was present when two little girls were saying their evening prayer. He asked what they were doing, why they were putting their hands together and closing their eyes, who God was and why they spoke to one whom they could not see. This little fellow had not heard prayers or grace throughout his short life, and his imitative powers had not been utilized. The Roman Church owes much of its success among the children to its knowledge of the psychology of imitation. It is an inspiring sight to see hundreds of Roman Catholic children recite the Creed with the reverent bowing and genuflection at the appropriate words; the children are quite uncritical; but the battle for their souls is half won. The secret is that imitation produces habit in the child because he has no inhibitions, and no previous experience and is by his feeling mass very suggestible; and imitation of a bodily state means the incipient sharing of the mental attitude behind it. The Psychology of Religion might have a good deal to say in favour of the resumption of the old customs of family prayers and saying of grace at meal times, and other modes of religious expressions which our fathers practised, and which so many of us have outgrown. But it is necessary to remember that such customs should not be imposed on an unwilling family and should always be saved from disaster by a large sprinkling of common sense.

Imagination plays an effective though not quite so great a part in the religious development of the child as Imitation. Every child is a Visionary with a crowd of angels for companions. All his imaginary conversations and his daydreams are related to this other world. Before he can reason about

God he has visions of God, and of religious matters. As one boy expressed his reading of a situation: 'If you do that God will see you and he will tell the Vicar.' It would be impossible to chronicle all the visions of childhood; it is sufficient to realize their importance. They are the pictures which prepare the child for the conscious and intelligent appreciation of religion. They must be welcomed and quietly directed. A false picture must be exchanged for a true one. They must be made to converge in the child's need for an adequate companion or 'socius,' a need fully satisfied by the presentation of the picture of Jesus Christ. So that when Jesus is presented as the best guide and the dearest companion the young heart leaps to the love that is offered. It goes out to Him with a gladness which astonishes. It talks to Him in its own language, in the vernacular of its own experience.

There is one other unconscious process in the early phase of childhood and it is connected with the instinct of constructiveness. The child is always busy. Sometimes this instinct is allied with that of curiosity and we get the analyst in the child. He takes everything to pieces to find out its secret. He is not an iconoclast but an investigator. Every muscle is seeking expression; he must be busy along good or bad lines. Religion needs little acts of expression to keep it alive. A missionary box and a cultivation of small acts of sacrifice are as essential to the spiritual well-being of the child as his prayers. Many a child has lost interest in religion because he found no practical means of expression provided for him.

When the period of unconscious Influence begins to pass away and when the feeling element in the child's life takes a less important place, he begins to 'theologize.' 'Theology is often the child's first science.' [1] But at first it is of the

[1] Pratt, p. 98.

crudest and funniest kind, a quaint mixture of his past experience, his dreams, and his wishes. A boy of six described God as ' a face of a man with big ears. He doesn't eat anything but only drinks dew.' A girl of four said 'Heaven is a nice place because there is no washing in heaven,' and on giving her first collection at church said, 'Doesn't God give us any sweeties for it?' The arrival of incipient thought, even at six years of age, brings with it an interesting form of query, which is not doubt, because there is no rival explanation to struggle with it, but which is the sign of the passage from an unconscious to an intelligent appreciation of religion. The earliest form comes in a question which the child applies mercilessly to all the stories which have been told him 'Are they true?' A girl of six years rushed in to her father saying that she had heard that Father Christmas was only a fairy story and that Daddy was the real Father Christmas. Then, she argued, if Father Christmas never really existed, 'I cannot believe in Jesus Christ.' That was a child's first taste of doubt and it was most important to treat it with sympathy and understanding and not to shelve such a query. The answer given was that it was quite true what she had heard; Daddy was Father Christmas. But whereas she had only a short story about him in her fairy book, there was a whole book devoted to Jesus Christ – the Bible – which was not a fairy book – but the truth. Sometimes this early awakening takes the form of a contradiction between the child's theology and his experience. Edmund Gosse in his sixth year prayed for a humming top which he had seen in a shop window. His parents had told him that he was to ask God for whatever he needed and it would be granted, subject to the Divine will.

'Accordingly,' he says, 'I introduced a supplication for this object into my evening prayer, carefully adding the words:

"If it is Thy will." This, I recollect, placed my mother in a dilemma, and she consulted my father. Taken, I suppose, at a disadvantage, my father told me I must not pray for "things like that." To which I answered by another query, "Why?" And I added that he said one ought to pray for things we needed, and that I needed the humming top a great deal more than I did the conversion of the heathen or the restitution of Jerusalem to the Jews, two objects of my nightly supplication which left me very cold.' [1]

Another cause of this questioning is the contradiction between his growing sense of justice and goodness and his theology. A child argues, 'It didn't seem to me possible that a God who had made us so prone to sin could punish us so severely as was taught.' 'If God is a just God, why should I be clothed in rags and have little to eat while some one else has beautiful clothes and too much to eat?' The second form of question has been born in the heart of a few sensitive and clever children and has produced a great number of our socialists. In fact, it is not an exaggeration to say that the treatment of this questioning on religion or society is the most important aspect of child training. At that point most people are either made believers or agnostics, constructive or destructive in their outlook.

When a child reaches the stage of theologizing it is time to give him direct instruction. Generally this occurs about five years. The mind of the child is active then, pushing its inquiries in all directions with the aid of the little experience it has gained. Theology will not be its only manifestation. Such curious incidents as the following will reveal its activity. A child of six years looked curiously at a visitor who was wearing a silk hat, a rare post-war adornment. After he

[1] *Father and Son*, p. 49.

had gone the little girl said, 'Does Mr. T. make coffins?' Her only experience of top hats was on the heads of those who drove the horses of a funeral cortège. Another child was frightened of losing her hair in an epidemic of ringworm. When she came home to her mother and her grandfather she asked, 'Is that how grandpa lost his hair?' These and similar stories show the limitations of the earliest attempt at thought. And therefore we are bound to instruct the children by a system of graded lessons which they can follow at different periods of their growth.

We cannot enter into the question of Sunday School teaching, as that is a wide and specialized subject; but we can deal with a matter which is closely connected with every parent, how to teach our young children to pray. Prayer must be graded, 'first the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear,' or as a child of six years five months put it, 'We do not like "Our Father," we don't understand it.'[1] The Lord's Prayer was taught to full-grown men and was rather a type of what principles should govern prayer than of a set and fixed prayer. If prayer is to be real it must be offered in terms which the mind can follow. A useful collection of prayers for young children is given in the *Guild of Health Monthly* (February, 1926), from which we make a selection. Thanksgiving is the first form of childish prayer and may be simply expressed in form like these:

'Thank you for the world so swee.
Thank you for the food we eat,
Thank you for the birds that sing,
Thank you, God, for everything.'

[1] Cf. Francis Thompson's poem, 'Little Jesus, wast Thou shy':
'And Thou know'st I cannot pray
To Thee in my fathes'r way.'

'For air and sunshine pure and sweet, we thank our Heavenly Father;
For grass that grows beneath our feet, we thank our Heavenly Father.
For lovely flowers and blossoms gay,
For trees and woods in bright array,
For birds that sing in joyful lay, we thank our Heavenly Father.'

'For Jesus, born a little child, we thank our Heavenly Father;
For Jesus, loving, kind and mild, we thank our Heavenly Father.
For Jesus Christ, the children's Friend,
Who to us all His Love doth send,
For Him Who loves us to the end, we thank our Heavenly Father.'

'Praise to God for things we see,
The growing flower, the waving tree,
Our Mother's face, the bright blue sky
Where birds and clouds go floating by,
Praise to God for seeing.'

'Praise to God for things we hear,
The voices of our playmates dear,
The merry bells, the song of birds,
Stories and tunes and kindly words.
Praise to God for hearing.'

Intercession comes next in point of time, and it is quite easy to get children to extend their intercessions over a broad field. Here are two typical intercessions:

'Dear Jesus, bless all the little black and brown and yellow babies in far off lands, who do not know Your Love, and send some one to tell them very soon.'

'O Loving Jesus, help all people who are ill and in pain to know that You will be glad when they are well and that You want to help them to be strong and brave and happy.'

A great deal depends on the manner in which these prayers are taught; a parent who shows no belief in the presence of God and has no reverence for Him may teach the child the words of the prayer but can never teach the child to pray. The atmosphere of children's prayers is everything.

Two other forms of Prayer can be taught to children at a later date. Confession needs a consciousness of having sinned, and Acts of Devotion need a development of intellectual power. They are unsuitable until adolescence (thirteen years onwards).

Much has been written on the child's sense of sin. It is of the utmost importance to ascertain when we are most likely to expect it to arise; otherwise we are prone to read our adult experience too readily into the child, with very evil effects. It is the height of folly to treat a child as a little sinner until he has realized the sense of sin. And there are at least two distinct stages before he comes to that point. In the earliest he is wholly innocent of any wrong-doing whatever and expresses his appetites and instincts automatically and without any sense of purpose or judgment. He is very like a little animal, though divine possibilities are hidden within him. At the next stage he begins to show that he is adopting a standard of judgments. Long before the sex instinct develops he begins to judge his own conduct and that of his playmates, parents and teachers; and he has all sorts of contrivances to escape from what he believes is the righteous punishment for his wrong actions. But his standard is that of his surroundings and not that of God. He has fear of consequences but no pangs of conscience. And this period

lasts until his twelfth year. Then pictures arise in his imagination of his having to give an account of his life to a higher authority than any set up on earth.

'Wrong-doing very soon becomes identified with sin, and disobedience to a parent with disobedience to God. Thenceforward religion becomes a motive-power to right conduct and supplies depth and inwardness to the sense of sin and guilt: the sinfulness of sin becomes more apparent, and the transgression of moral law more serious.' [1]

It is not until he has reached this stage, however, that he can be said to have a real sense of sin, and those parents who try to force an inner and foreign growth along the lines of their own experience are damaging the child's spiritual growth. At the same time, it is most important that laxer people should be reminded that to neglect a child's spiritual needs at a time like this is spiritual murder.

We come now to the very important and critical period of adolescence. Starbuck, who is the best authority to consult, reckons its extent from ten or eleven years to twenty-four or twenty-five, though there is considerable individual, sex and race variation in regard to both the initial and later limit, which for our purpose does not need to be taken into account. Many new and interesting forces have taken their place in the recesses of personality. Two most important instincts have sprung into activity. The sex instinct, with its intensity of emotion, and the gregarious instinct with its strong urge to the team or gang spirit, have to be reckoned with. The child also passes out of the merely passive and feeling state into a consciousness of intelligence and will. He begins to take his life more into his own hands and to win a sense of mastery and heightened personality. At the same time there are

[1] Dr. Tennant in *The Child and Religion*, p. 183.

violent uprushes from the unconscious where childish experiences have been faithfully recorded and from which all kinds of surprising feelings emanate. There is no need to mention the additional fact that the child comes for the first time into possession of all his bodily functions. These novelties give rise to two types of adolescent experience – the pleasurable and painful experiences of growth.

The first type may be summed up in Pratt's delightful phrase, in which he describes adolescence as 'the flowering time for religion.' The child has ceased to be a mere passive feeling mass; feeling still exists and indeed in greater quantity but only in the sense that the root of the tree grows and extends, as the trunk and branches and leaves shoot forth. The feeling root is developing a splendid tree of intellect and will. The youth gains a healthy sense of his own responsibility and seeks to fulfil the claims of his whole personality. He grows from thinghood to selfhood. The ideas of God and duty and religious observance have been external to the child during the earlier years, but now they take root in his life and have a vital significance. Heretofore they have been embodied in precept or custom or his own playful imagination. Now they have begun to be his own. As a respondent writes: 'At fourteen or fifteen I became a Christian. I can give no cause for the change. I then seemed to realize for the first time all the truths that had been presented before.' This gradual flowering is after the divine pattern: 'First the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear.'

With this new increase in individuality there develops a new interest in other persons. Nature prepares for it by the strong urge of the gregarious instinct. At first it is most difficult to handle. The youth joins the gang or the club in a very primitive way. If you take these boys and sit them in a Sunday School class you have anarchy and confusion, but

put them into a fivepenny cap and call them soldiers you have self-respect, enthusiasm, peace. Class he hates, but company he loves. Sometimes this company takes the lowest form of membership of the gangs of hooligans or young criminals, but it has infinite possibilities of development and refinement. That is its promise for religion.

There are at least three processes of development which arise from the heightened sense of personality and of social relationships in the religious life of the adolescent. First, the search for an Ideal; secondly, the surrender to it, and thirdly, the call for companions in sharing that Ideal.

The search for an ideal is the direct result of the growth of self-consciousness. The adolescent feels a new inwardness and responsibility and seeks a pattern to help him to make the most of his life. He is conscious of such unlimited possibilities.

'First of all, the vision of progress beckons him to nobler living. Then the vision of love bathes all life in the glow of sunrise. Finally the vision of duty begins to dawn and to beckon him on to splendid achievements.' [1]

Such visions need concentration. In one direction they frequently take the form of a call to life's vocation as in the lives of Watt, Chalmers, Livingstone, Edison, Moody; in other forms they fasten themselves round some Ideal Person, so that many youths are found to have some Ideal like a Napoleon or a Nietzsche or a S. Francis for their encouragement. For religion this stretching out for spiritual aid is of the utmost importance. It cannot be without significance that the earliest group of disciples in the Gospel were adolescents. They were helping their fathers when they were called to the service of Our Lord; their mothers are always

[1] Bruce, p. 75.

watching over their welfare; only one of them was old enough to be married; they are addressed as 'lads; in all probability they were between the ages of eighteen (for John lived nearly seventy years after the Resurrection) and twenty-two. What a climax it must have been to their struggles for an Ideal when the Master turned to them with those often repeated words: 'Follow Me.' Religious education finds Biography of the utmost help to the youth. No home should be without its full complement of the best and noblest literature of this kind.

'No picture so captivates the young mind as one that calls for devotion, enthusiasm and self-sacrifice. Girls and lads will listen for hours; their eyes will glance with keenest feeling as you tell them of the men of Marathon, the story of Hannibal crossing the Alps, the lives of Luther and Knox and Wesley, of Lincoln and Garfield, and Washington and Wellington.' [1]

This craving for a personal ideal shows itself in this way to be one of the greatest needs of youth, and its final satisfaction can only come by taking the next step of surrender to the Divine Person of Our Lord.

The surrender thus effected is called Conversion. Starbuck startled the world by the results of his researches.

'We may safely lay it down as a law,' he writes, 'that among the females there are two tidal waves of religious awakening at about thirteen and sixteen, followed by a less significant period at eighteen; while among the males the great wave is at about sixteen, preceded by a wavelet at twelve, and followed by a surging up at eighteen or nineteen. Conversion is a distinctly adolescent phenomenon.'[2]

Although this is a sweeping statement which omits the

[1] Bruce, pp. 84, 85. [2] Starbuck, pp. 34, 28.

great classical conversions of History – S. Paul, S. Augustine and Tolstoi – it is true of those lives which have followed a normal development. If the mind is unhampered by false training and the child has been taught to make the right religious adjustments it will have a true ripening of mind and will; the only differences will be those of intensity. But we can postpone further discussion of this matter until we come to the chapter on Conversion.

The third process is the call for companionship. Religious history is unanimous about the reality of this process. Initiation ceremonies of adolescents are universal, and proclaim in loud tones the imperfection of all isolated forms of religion. The Church is more than a divine Creation; it is an urgent psychological necessity. The gang spirit is not the only force which demands it; there is the common need of sharing common enthusiasms, which the individual could not carry alone, and of bearing the pain which comes from the growing development of will and intellect. The Christian self comes to itself among other selves. Therefore the Church is a necessity for the expression of young Christian life. It is a Psychologist of the Free Church who says that:

'I find that as a rule the Church of England and the Church of Rome, not less than the Greek Church, prefer to confirm the young about the age of thirteen or fourteen. The majority of the Protestant Churches wait for a later period. In the Church of Scotland and in most Presbyterian Churches, the average age is between seventeen and eighteen, and the Free Church, especially in the Highlands of Scotland, prefers a very much later date for "admission to Church privileges." The teaching of Psychology is wholly in favour of the earlier date.'[1]

[1] Bruce, p. 83.

We need only add that Psychology demands early Churchmanship as well as personal devotion to Christ.

So far we have dealt with the positive, happy and joyful development of adolescent religion. But there is also a group of experiences of bewilderment, depression and difficulty to be taken into account. They are largely due to temperament, or bad training, or to the normal growth of the intellectual powers bringing scepticism and doubt. The bad training can be eliminated by the education of parents and teachers and of those who have care of the young, and is therefore not an essential part of adolescent experience; it may be due to an over-dogmatic attitude or to an overworked sense of sin. But there are dark and trying experiences in the religious life of those young people who have not been subjected to false training. They have been divided into 'Storm and Stress' and 'Doubt.'

'Storm and Stress' - includes such mental states as a vague sense of incompleteness, indefinable aspirations and dissatisfactions, a sense of sin sometimes exceedingly vague, sometimes quite definite, varying from the consciousness of some particular offence to the indefinite conviction of having committed 'the unpardonable sin,' exhausting struggle between high ideals and tempestuous passions, morbid depression, and fear of eternal damnation.[1] It would be a narrow conclusion to put these experiences down to the tumultuous effects of the sex instinct. The whole person is growing, and the pain and perplexity which it experiences is a matter of the whole personality. It is true, however, to regard some of these negative and gloomy conditions as the direct result of the uprushes of subliminal feeling from the unconscious deeps of personality. And where a morbid or unnatural childhood has been experienced

[1] Pratt, p. 111.

there is an increased condition of storm and stress. Take, for example, some of the extreme cases of abnormal depression under so-called conviction of sin. Much of it is due to physical weakness in growing youths and especially among adolescent females; but by far the bulk of it is due to the Protestant theological prepossessions of our youth. They are taught to believe that they must go through the Pauline experience before they can be saved.

'That the earnest youth possessed of views like these and looking in vain within himself for a certain sort of ill-defined experience as a token of his "change of heart," should regard as sinful many of the thoughts, feelings and impulses natural to his years and should describe the vague dissatisfactions of adolescence in the conventional phrases of a somewhat mechanical theology, is exactly what we should expect.'[1]

Painful emotion for its own sake is a tragedy and may lead to a crop of morbid fears and to such a state of introspection that the victim may believe himself guilty of the unpardonable sin or to other forms of religious mania. However great and bitter in reality Sin may be, it is the height of folly to superimpose a morbid sense of sin on to the perfectly natural feelings of depression which accompany growth. The steady spiritual development of the soul is hindered and not helped by forcing such a sense. And the price of sowing such tares in the Unconscious has to be paid. There are sufficient growing pains for the adolescent without adding any more. We may sum up in Starbuck's words : 'In view of the significance of the Storm and Stress phenomena, it is hardly safe to lay it down as an inviolable rule that the ideal is to escape it entirely. Unless

[1] Pratt, p. 114.

the condition is distinctly pathological, it is conceivable that the youth is, in such times, in a most normal and hopeful state. If he is discreetly let alone at the proper time and helped over difficulties when the occasion demands it, if he is honest and earnest in struggling with his difficulties, the strife may simply mean that he is on the border of a new spiritual revelation. Not infrequently the respondents say that the greatest significance for after development has come out of the struggles of youth.'

The other phenomena of Doubt follows closely on the period of Storm and Stress. We have already noticed the primitive form of doubt in the child, but now these nascent and isolated doubts reach their climax. Storm and Stress begin at thirteen and a half in a girl and at sixteen in a boy; Doubt at fifteen or sixteen in a girl and at eighteen in a boy. At first sight this is an astounding assertion. Starbuck expands it by other interesting remarks:

'Looking through the cases,' he says, 'we find that almost all of the doubts begin between eleven and twenty. There are a few scattered ones during the twenties, and almost none after thirty. The scattered ones that come after twenty-six are so few as to tend to establish the law that doubt belongs almost exclusively to youth.' [1]

His contention is that there is some deep psycho-physiological disturbance in adolescence which produces this general prevalence of doubt at that period.

This disturbance has both an intellectual and an emotional element in it. The intellectual element is described by Starbuck as 'a growth into a life of clear consciousness.'

Doubt takes hold of all kinds of religious and moral

[1] Starbuck, p. 234.

questions. The new teaching at school or college conflicts often with the religious training at home; the growing sense of justice or goodness makes some standard acknowledged in childhood appear ridiculous; the lives of professing religious people offend the young mind by a noticeable divergence between faith and practice; or the faith in prayer, which was natural at the mother's knee, is lost in the presence of the obstacles of life. The emotional element is clearly seen in those cases where no specific reason for doubt can be given. Here the experience of 'storm and stress' and doubt seem to merge into one. Girls illustrate this more clearly than boys. 'I have had times of doubt,' writes one, 'when I wondered almost if anything were true and how we could believe it. This would usually come at times when I felt unusually despondent and nothing went right; it would end as soon as I felt better.' This doubt of everything is of an emotional type. It is only the exceptional woman whose doubts have an intellectual nature. Starbuck sums the matter up by saying that men are more apt to have doubts without storm or stress, while women are more apt to undergo a ferment of feeling in the absence of doubt. That is, one might say that adolescence is for women primarily a period of storm and stress, while for men it is in the highest sense a period of doubt.

Pratt considers that we ought to add a third element to the origin of adolescent doubt. The last forty or fifty years has produced a fashion of doubt.

'This was not always so. The youth of the Middle Ages as a rule was not expected to go through a period of doubt. But to-day things have changed. Youthful scepticism is one of the natural products of our age, and this fact has been advertised in sermons, theological treatises, popular novels and learned works on the psychology of religion, till every

one knows it. It would probably have been instructive had some circulator of a questionnaire in the early nineties calculated the rise in the curve of adolescent doubt following the publication of *Robert Elsmere*.'[1]

This does not mean that doubt is essentially a conventional matter but that it has been extended beyond spontaneous expressions of it, into superficial forms. We cannot deal with doubts of later life, which are more rare and nearly always of an intellectual kind. Such examples as Newman are outside the range of adolescent doubt. Most young people settle down in the middle twenties into a stable condition of mature life. Their doubts have done them no harm, but rather good. Parents will not be so foolish as to hush them up as a kind of sin; this policy will only produce weaklings, or a temporary check, leaving the personality to take revenge by a recrudescence of worse troubles in the future.

> 'No, when the fight begins within himself,
> A man's worth something. God stoops o'er his head,
> Satan looks up between his feet – both tug –
> He's left, himself, i' the middle: the soul wakes
> And grows.'
>
> BROWNING, 'Bishop Blougram's Apology.'

'Doubt is a means of calling up and utilizing the latent possibilities of one's nature. If there is a boundless substratum of healthy life on which to draw, and if there is a high degree of earnestness in the desire to know truth in order to use it, doubts are rather to be met and mastered than to be shunned.' [2]

[1] Pratt, pp. 117, 118. [2] Starbuck, p. 243.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF SIN

It is surprising to find that most books on the Psychology of Religion entirely overlook the Psychology of Sin. Bruce has given a place to every possible aspect of his subject except this; Thouless is silent also. There is no doubt that the theological and Biblical conceptions of sin have something to do with this silence. On a question of such tremendous importance and one which can only be fully realized from a transcendental view-point, it is difficult to write without fear of misunderstanding or of belittling a fact of such stupendousness. But there is a Psychology of Sin, just as surely as there is one of that other stupendous religious experience of Conversion, and we are bound to face it.

Psychology has first to define its province on this question. It has no right to fix values for sin. It cannot say, on the one hand, that sin is an illusion, and bid us envy the animals because

> 'They do not sweat and whine about their condition ;
> They do not lie awake in the dark and weep for their sins;
> They do not make me sick discussing their duty towards God.'
>
> WALT WHITMAN.

Nor, on the other hand, can it say that sin is the breach of a great objective Law – that is the province of ethics; nor that it is a personal offence against God. 'Against Thee only have I sinned'; that is the province of Religion. It is concerned entirely with sin as an experience within the realm of human life, with a scientific investigation of the experience and be-

haviour of sinners. In this way it has an indirect bearing on ethics and religion, and can supply them both with material on an intensive or an extensive scale, in the individual or in the group. It bids us take care lest we draw our conclusions too narrowly in the manner of the earlier Mr. R. J. Campbell, who used to describe 'sin against God as sin against the common life'; and it bids us sweep away the dust and webs from our hasty accumulations of 'artificial sins,' which have sometimes been made to include innocent social customs or the high spirits of little children. By a thorough investigation of experience it asks for wholeness and fairness in the values set up by its kindred sciences. Unlike Bishop Westcott, who preferred to pass sin by, or Mr. Hornby, who 'hated evil, but closed his eyes to it and preferred to think that it was not there' (A. C. Benson), it goes unafraid into the darkness of the lowest pit for its material.

The study of Comparative Religion furnishes us with some important observations. There is a distinct evolution in the sense of sin. At first, it was a very mild affair and was connected with acts in contravention of custom, law and tabu. It was entirely concerned with outward behaviour, not with inner motives, and thrived on fears and penalties. When law and custom came to be regarded as the will of the gods then sin became an offence against the divine. Vast numbers of social and sanitary regulations affecting the community, as many of those found in the book of Leviticus, are found among the earliest ideas of divine law. Various penalties are attached to a breach of them, and although regarded as the will of God, they are still external in their operation. They constitute, however, the raw material both of morality and religion. After years of development the transition is made to an entirely inner idea of sin when the Prophet cries,

'Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips; for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts.' The sense of sin has passed from the demands of an outer code to the compulsion of an inner law, from acts to motives, from the negative 'Thou shalt not' to the positive and complete ideal, from sin as the contravention of a limited law to sin as the failure to reach the highest and the best. It is quite clear, therefore, that when we speak of a universal sense of sin, we mean something very different from this developed idea; it is better to speak not of a universal sense of sin but of the universality of these instincts and prohibitions which issue in a sense of sin.

Although Comparative Religion has given us details on an extensive scale, the best method of psychological study is by the intensive examination of the experience of the individual consciousness. We have already seen that the sense of sin is just as evolutionary in the child as in the race. The complete development of it, however, requires the combined growth of Instincts, Will, and Conscience. To take a very inadequate illustration; the engine needs fuel for propulsion, a driver for operation, and a rail track for direction. Instinct propels, Will operates, the Ideal directs. Of the instincts it will be enough to say that they are universal 'innate tendencies' which demand activity by their compelling force. We have dealt with them in detail elsewhere [1] and here it is only necessary to add that they are not signs of depravity. They are the raw material for good or evil. That seems to be the central secret of the Psychology of Sin in the New Testament. The energy hidden in the instincts is essential to the Christian life. The greatest sinner has the capacity for becoming the greatest saint. Stoicism and some Eastern religions cut life in two; Christianity accepts it whole. Hunger

[1] *The Story of Psychology* (Benn).

and sex are the bedrock of morals. 'Thou art Simon – Thou shalt be called Cephas.' The seat of sin is elsewhere.

'Not the existence within us of appetitive tendencies but voluntary surrender of the self to them is the essence of sinfulness in its primary forms – there must be both awareness of obligation and voluntary selection of an impulse towards a lower end when a higher might be followed before sin can be contracted.' [1]

Awareness of a standard and a false choice must be present before we can be said to sin. The secret lies in the conscience and in the will.

We have an innate power of making judgments of value, according to the ideal which we accept. That power of judgment we call conscience. It is not necessary to trespass on the special preserves of ethics or religion and to say what conscience ought to demand. There is quite a large part of conscience which comes within the legitimate domains of Psychology. For example, its workings are easily discerned in the ways of children. It shows its activity long before the sex instinct and seems to be just as innate. If a small child has done wrong he will adopt some line of escape for his action; he will divert his mother's attention from it to his toys and exercise all kinds of ingenuity to lead her off the scent. He is the judge of his own conduct, and soon begins to judge that of those around him.

'Whatever its nature, conscience seems to be as innate as the psycho-physical dispositions we call instincts. With the dawn of self-consciousness the child becomes busy judging his own conduct, as well as that of his playmates, parents

[1] Tennant, *Expository Times*, 11, p. 412.

and teachers; and throughout our lives we continue judging ourselves and others.'[1]

Conscience guarantees the upward march of man as surely as the sex instinct guarantees his continuance.

The reality of the conscience as an innate force differing in origin from the instincts has been illustrated in the cure of many nervous disorders. The ethical self may be repressed as distinctly as the instincts themselves. It is commonly known that the decay of religion has increased nervous disorders because religion saves a man from ethical complexes and from a divided self. Dr. Drever gives an account of a young man who was treated for 'nerves.' He had dreamed that he was standing before a coffin in which his grandfather was lying dead. The dead body was clear to see. As he looked at it the body moved and the head turned uneasily to one side. Dream analysis showed that the grandfather was the young man's ideal: his ideal was dead but was restless in death. He was dissatisfied with his manner of life, and needed some real work to do. His conscience had been repressed and the pent-up energy had reacted upon his whole physical and mental life just in the same way as a physical instinct under repression. Numerous similar cases might be given.

There is a vigorous innateness about conscience which we cannot dismiss. We may not agree that it is a sixth sense, or with Wordsworth that it is

> 'God's most intimate presence in the soul
> And His most perfect image in the world,'

nor need we be afraid of saying that its judgments are often those of our home or school or church or social class, nor that nations and civilizations and individuals have different stan-

[1] Mackenzie, p. 35.

dards of judgment, but we are bound to admit that we each possess an innate bare capacity to make moral judgments. We are also bound to admit as a matter of practical experience that these judgments are accompanied by characteristic emotions like 'pangs of conscience,' 'goads,' 'pricks,' very much after the manner of the instincts. Psychology, maybe, cannot go further; for our purpose it is only necessary to know that we have this innate capacity in us, and that it plays an important part in our sense of sin. What that part is we shall leave until we have considered the Psychology of the Will.

An analysis of the instincts and emotions, which provide the fuel for personality, seems abstract because none of them are found working in isolation. They are all organized into groups or sentiments. Sometimes the nucleus of the group is an outside object like the money for which a miser forms a strong sentiment, or the books which occupy the greater part of the conscious stream of the mind of a book-lover. Sometimes the nucleus is an ideal like Patriotism or Religion. In any case, however, the instincts group themselves round the nucleus and form a sentiment. An example can be seen in the character of old Grandet, the miser, in Balzac's novel. Here is a character ruled by the miser sentiment. The whole household is swept into its organized force. His wife and servant become its tools. They must save and work from morning until night; they must deny themselves every pleasure in order to allow him the indulgence of his supreme sentiment. Miserliness takes tyranny, pretence, suspicion, vigilance and prudence to help it. Grandet's genuine affection for Eugenie his daughter would have led in most men to generosity, but in Grandet his very generosity is transformed by his prevailing sentiment. He gives Eugenie a rare gold coin twice a year, but she is not to part with it; he loves to

see it grow; it is in reality only the transference of his money from one coffer to another. Every sentiment which opposes the ruling sentiment finally atrophies and leaves the field more and more open to the miserly sentiment. This example of the organizing power of personality shows the peculiar function of the Psychologist. He has no power to pronounce a character good or bad. To him the development of a miser's character is as fitting and interesting a subject as that of a missionary's, a sinner's as fitting as a saint's. But that is by the way.

Every sentiment, good or bad, has a life story, which is really the history of how it began and how it grew. Most of us in middle life are the victims of a few sentiments and sometimes of a ruling sentiment, which we have spent our lives in fashioning. The process has been going on in all of us from the third year of our lives when as a child we were able for the first time to distinguish between ourselves and the outer world. Parents and teachers have added something to it, and throughout life, seizing a variety of ideas and ideals, it has proceeded by development or decay, until the character has become more or less fixed under the rule of a few prevailing sentiments.

I have said that we are constantly organizing our instincts and emotions into sentiments for the uses of life, but we realize that there are many parts of us which are not yet organized at all. In fact, sometimes the unorganized part of us is stronger than that which is organized. That is why we divide people into the strong and the weak-willed. Professor James described them as the 'Healthy minded' and the 'Sick.' Jung in a similar way divides mankind into the Introverts and the Extraverts, one characterized by a lack of confidence and inability to action, and the other by confidence and a burning desire for responsibility. The differ-

ence between these classes is one of Will. A man may be organized for holiness or for sinfulness; in both cases he has a strong will. One of the strangest of religious problems is that of the Lover of God who experiences violent changes from conflict to peace. The reason is to be found in the will; he is badly organized and requires the perpetual knowledge of the presence of God to hold his mental and emotional life in harmony. Other good people may have no such conflicts because they are organized in their mental and emotional life and seem to be naturally Christian. We cannot, however, do without the Jeremiahs or the Isaiahs, the S. Pauls or the S. Johns in the varied orchestra of life. But the point for us to remember here is that the personality is undergoing this inherent process of organization; also that there is part of the instinctive life of the personality left out of this system which is liable to act independently of it. On the one hand there is the self as organized and on the other that part of the self which is not organized. 'The Will is the organized self in function, the self in movement. When the instincts and complexes function we call them impulses.' [1]

Although Will depends so much on the organization of the instinctive life it possesses a special attribute which must not be forgotten. The personality accepts the responsibility for the organization, which has been carried out. All theory may be agains a doctrine of free will; all experience is in favour of it. We inherently accept the responsibility for our condition, and feel

> 'The sins that men do by two and two
> They shall pay for one by one.'

This ultimate fact of experience must be accepted along with the organizing process which we have traced, and we can

[1] Hadfield, p. 70.

now turn to the consideration of the relation of Instinct, Conscience and Will in the psychology of Sin.[1]

In his discussion on lies Mr. Pym says that 'it is important just to notice that most lies can be traced back to a primary source and that that source will generally be found to be connected directly or indirectly with the primary instincts. In outline that is how all temptation works and all sins come to be.' [2] 'Sin derives its power in us from one or more of the primary instincts.' The compelling energy with which the instincts are endowed urges us to lines of action which are not in keeping with the Ideal which is presented to us by conscience. If our life is organized under true moral sentiments the will finds no difficulty in deciding what action to take, but in the choice between what instinct urges and what conscience presents there arises first of all the intermediate state of temptation. That is not a state of sin but of suspension. The choice is not made; the battle has to be fought; but meanwhile no definite action has transpired. Sin conceives only when the instinct is permitted to express itself by the will against the claims of the conscience.

All kinds of experiences may take place according to the ideal held by the conscience and according to the condition of the organization of the will for making moral choice. A man or a woman with a low ideal and an untrained conscience

[1] It must be remembered that the Will has the power of accepting or rejecting a sentiment and in this way is responsible at every step in the building up of character and for the whole. 'By deciding in favour of a particular sentiment on any occasion of conflict, the self modifies its own constitution accordingly. It now possesses a Will strengthened in favour of the accepted sentiment, and correspondingly weakened for the rejected sentiment, for the Will is the whole of the organized life impulse, and expresses what may be regarded as the purpose or direction of life' (Hardman, p. 202).

[2] Pym, (1) pp. 56, 57.

will find practically no sense of sin in the claim of an instinct for expression.

'A typical example is provided by the man who delights in and always seeks the company of his fellow-men without any desire to make any contribution to their general welfare; or the woman, who exhausts the energy of her social instinct in what she refers to heavily as her "social duties," her "society engagements," but has no mind to spare for her social responsibilities. West-end Clubs and East-end "pubs" afford many examples of the prostitution of the social instinct.'[1]

Indeed, it may happen that a person may have lost all ideals because he is so thoroughly organized by selfish sentiments, like a miser or a thief or a debauchee, and the claims of no single primitive instinct may trouble him. On the other hand a man may be so sensitive in his ideals that he has an overworked sense of sin when an instinct seeks expression in his nature and cannot refrain from the Apostle's cry, 'Who

[1] Pym, (1) p. 59.

'Original Sin' must not therefore be confused with 'original guilt.' 'What is called original sin is not sin but the precondition of sin, the stuff out of which we may elaborate either sin or virtue.' (Tennant, *Expository Times*, pp. 30–411.)

'Temptation at any given time, then, lies in the appeal of that particular impulse, which will prove injurious, or of inferior service to the whole life of the individual, regarded not as an isolated unit, but as a member of a community. Each organized emotional system makes its separate claim repeatedly, and all are judged by a mysterious Self or Ego, which sits, not apart from them as an independent arbiter, but in close association with each of them, weighing them all in connection with the whole self, the ideal self, which is greater than the sum total of all the separate or departmental selves represented by these various systems' i.e. sentiments or organized instincts. (Hardman, pp. 203, 204.)

shall deliver me from the body of this death?'[1] Again, by gradual accumulation of right sentiments he may have overcome this disharmony and feel a sense of unity between his will and his conscience. The most difficult case, however, is the person who is so little organized either for good or evil that he becomes the victim of stray instincts which are out of all connection with his conscience, be it ever so sensitive, or with the organized Will. It is doubtful whether he can be said to sin, as he acts under impulses over which he has no control. Such people become kleptomaniacs, alcoholics and sexual perverts. Their troubles must be carefully distinguished from theft, drunkenness and rape. They are sicknesses and not sins, diseases and not misdemeanours. The subject of them is a victim and not a culprit, controlled by a terrific emotional force and not the agent in a wicked choice. He requires a doctor and not a policeman. He is suffering because a large part of his emotional life is acting out of relation with the whole personality.

Such experience shows us the complexity of those states

[1] Dr. Hadfield gives a further example closely akin to these. He shows that in the problem of 'free love' *v.* 'marriage' it is not a question of Nature *v.* Convention but of a conflict between the earlier and later phases of development. The man who lives polygamously is satisfying a primitive instinct of his youth; in older years it should be superseded by the influence and activity of the parental and tender instinct. A form of sin may be due to a refusal to accept such development. The inconsistencies of a Benvenuto Cellini, who carried on a life of profligacy and murder side by side with a religious profession; or of the Silician peasants, who go out from Mass to murder their enemies; or of some Protestants, who have an unchristian callousness to suffering and a low commercial morality, seem to come under this type of experience, although it would be necessary to examine each case separately before it could be set down as moral disease. The psychological conditions are, however, very similar.

which we are liable to describe under one common experience as sin. Those which are the expression of an instinctive longing in the face of the ideal of conscience and by definite permission of the will alone can be rightly called sin.

Modern psychology has shown the need of repentance and of some form of confession as a way out of the unrest of mind caused by sin. Research shows that it is not only the sick and morally diseased, nor the higher religions, that are sensitive to sin, but that it is a universal phenomenon. The Assyrian, Egyptian, Babylonian and Hebrew rituals all had a place for confession. We may not agree with the form of it; and psychology goes a long way in reminding us of some of its defects as practised in certain religions and branches of the Church; we may feel that the Reformation was right when it substituted repentance for penance and voluntary confession for auricular and compulsory confession; but we have to acknowledge that there are grave dangers in the repressions of sinfulness and that a frank confession acts as a remarkable tonic to the burdened soul. We may feel that it should be a medicine and not a food; limited to the greater sins and not meticulous in its bearing on such small matters as omission of grace before meals and unpunctuality at service; yet there must be some solid reason for the fact that the authors of the *Dictionary of Psychological Medicine* found only one Roman Catholic patient among those who were suffering from melancholia. Some power must reside in the process even though we cannot say the same of all forms of it.

The analogue of Confesssion in Psychology is Psychoanalysis, and from the results of the use of this method much can be learned about the importance of confession. It warns us of the great dangers of repression. 'Medically, the worst form of sin, as Dr. Brown reminds us, is not the sin that has overthrown us, nor the sin that has been conquered,

but the sin which we have simply allowed to live within us unfought and unfaced and now lives a vigorous life as repressed. When a repression of this sort has been squarely faced and acknowledged before God there is a sense of freedom and liberty, as when an ordinary complex is brought into the conscious stream of the mind of a neurasthenic. Young people especially hide certain sins from their parents and friends and allow them to form neuroses of the worst type.

'Every priest knows only too well that there are certain solitary sins of the body to which young people, especially boys, are extraordinarily prone. Few things are more striking in the pathological records of psychoanalysis, than the frequency with which neuroses of various kinds are ultimately traceable to the beginning of indulgence in these habits.' [1]

Psychoanalysis not only points out the inner need of some kind of confession: it also reminds us of the urgent necessity of psychological knowledge on the part of the confessor. It is necessary to be able to distinguish between all the various forms of sin or kindred conditions mentioned above. So conservative a work as *Psychology and the Church* recognizes that

'there is a distinction between moral disease and actual sin – the priest is himself under no small obligation to those who have thrown new light on the causes of certain types of mental and moral disturbance.' [2] It is within the experience of many of us also that people have gone to confession in vain, because the priest did not realize the psychology of his patient and was unable to distinguish the form of

[1] Hudson, p. 52. [2] Hardman, pp. 200, 201.

temptation or difficulty with which he was to deal. We are all indebted to the Psychologists above all for their emphasis on positive treatment in dealing with sinners. James saw this valuable note in the Thought Healers, who were just coming forward in his day. The distracted patient comes to them and says, 'What shall I do to be clear, right, sound, whole, well?' And the answer is, 'You are well, sound and clear already, if you did but know it.' The whole matter may be summed up in one sentence – 'God is well and so are you.' [1]

Coué's emphasis on positive suggestions finds its parallel in the advice of modern religious writers to begin on a positive note. Dr. Relton writes on Prayer:

'Prayer is not one long self commiseration and one dismal communing with ourselves over our many faults and failings. The primary reference in all prayer is not downwards to self, but upwards to God. Hence the remedy for coldness and weariness in the saying of our prayers is not an increased time for prayers, nor the use of a more varied assortment of books of devotion, still less an increased dwelling upon our lack of faith and our need for grace. The remedy is simple. Let us begin by a concentrated effort of mind and will to lift up our hearts to God.' [2]

The same may be said of repentance. We must turn to God first. We must pray for the things that are good and not against temptations which assail us.[3]

[1] James, p. 108. [2] Hardman, p. 98.

[3] Hardman, p. 217. 'The New Psychology pronounces the Christian system completely mistaken in that it represents sin as a positive evil and sets out to defeat and kill it by strengthening the power of the will. In place of this it teaches that the mind should

Again, Psychoanalysis has taught us that some sins need more than repentance. Sublimation of the emotional energy alone can safeguard the penitent from further trouble. Many of his so-called sins are misdirected energy. The New Psychology announces that emotional energy can be redirected by the process of sublimation – the process by which instinctive emotions are diverted from their original ends and redirected to purposes satisfying to the individual and of value to the community. A man with a strong instinct of curiosity can direct it in search of new knowledge by study or adventure; an unmarried woman can find ample scope for the sublimation of the sex instinct and the maternal instinct in the service of the poor and sick; 'the child who has strong instincts of self display may become a poet in which his imagination is displayed, a lecturer who displays his thoughts, a preacher who displays his beliefs, an actor who visibly interprets the thoughts and emotions of others'; [1] a person who has a strong instinct of negative self-feeling may sublimate it in the service of an unpopular cause for which he will find power at his disposal to suffer. What a debt we owe to such group movements as the Boy Scouts, Girl Guides and the Church Lads' Brigade and kindred movements for the sublimating influences which they bring to boys and girls in their difficult passage to puberty; the instincts are turned to the service of society. There can be no doubt that many so-called sins are the result of insufficient scope for emotional energies and he is a clever director who can point out the path of Christian service which can fit the needs of an individual penitent. It would be unfair to say

be turned away from all consideration of evil to dwell only on the good that it desires. Positive quest of good rather than any negative uprooting of evil is said to be the true way of progress.'

[1] Hadfield, p. 160.

that the Church has been ignorant of this process. But it has had to wait on the researches of Psychology into the instinctive life of mankind before it could have a scientific basis on which to work. Now it is time that such guidance was applied to those cases which require it. Of course there are cases where sublimation can only be regarded as 'second best.' When the will has deliberately erred against the light of conscience

'there is nothing for it but self-control, a self-control which is not to be discovered by a stroke of luck in a moment of crisis, but which must have been slowly built up by patient and systematic discipline. If there is to be success in meeting the sudden impulse to evil, or again in slowly weaning the self of some bad habit, there must be watchfulness and the hardness of training. Filling the mind with good thoughts and desires, avoiding danger as far as may be by sublimation of the instinctive powers, the Christian will yet count it his wisdom and his duty to mark his life with the sign of the Cross, not only in the sense of self-sacrifice for others, but also in the sense of self-regimen on behalf of the soul he has to save.' [1]

'A charge to keep I have,
A God to glorify,
A never dying soul to save,
And fit it for the sky;
To serve the present age,
My calling to fulfil;
Oh may it all my powers engage
To do my Master's will.'

But there are many cases where the instinctive life is out

[1] Hardman, pp. 219, 220.

of order, and where direction along the lines of sublimation comes as a great blessing.

Mr. Hudson, in his thoughtful book on *Recent Psychology and the Christian Religion*, gives a summary of the divergences between Psychoanalysis and Confession.

'First,' he says, 'the complex with which an analyst is dealing is seated in the Unconscious; it is repressed. Now, in hearing confessions, it is clear that a priest is never dealing – nor is the penitent – with a repressed complex in this technical sense; for, by definition, a complex that is repressed cannot be confessed. I can no more confess my "repressed" sins than I can confess the sins of some one else. Secondly, in the vast majority of cases, one analysis either cures or – doesn't. The analyst has no sympathy with the Catholic encouragement of repeated, much less frequent, confessions. Thirdly, there is no real parallel between a wise confessor's direction and the sublimation which we have seen to be the analyst's ultimate objective. The process of sublimation is in its essence unconscious. Fourthly, the final aim and object of making a confession is to obtain absolution – an analyst is concerned, not with sin, but with mental disease. Fifthly, the analyst relies to a great extent throughout on a certain peculiar attitude which the patient, in every case, adopts to him – the technical name of which is Transference. It is clear that transference plays no part whatever – or ought to play no part – in Confession.' [1]

These divergences are well worthy of consideration, but we have said enough to show that there is much to learn from

[1] Hudson, pp. 48 ff.

the methods of the New Psychology in relation to sin and repentance. Psychology can advocate no special type of Confession. It presents certain facts of mental experience which all schools in the Church should take to heart.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF CONVERSION

'CONVERSION' once had a great vogue in the Church; then it became vague; and now has almost vanished from our vocabulary. There are several reasons for this. Among certain religious people it was spoken of as though it was the one article of Religion, and lost its power by its obtrusiveness. To thoughtful minds the methods and products of conversion became obnoxious. Frequently it was associated with tears, hysteria, and excitement of a doubtful kind, and the converted man was full of prejudices of his own importance and saintliness. With a better knowledge of the Bible text it has come as a surprise that the word 'Conversion' occurs only once in the New Testament, and that in connection with the mass and not with the individual (Acts xv. 3: 'the conversion of the Gentiles'). The Revised Version translates the verb forms of the word by 'turn' in order to emphasize the fact that its use generally refers to the turning away from some particular sin rather than to the loose and popular meaning of 'Conversion.' Our Lord addressed the Apostles and not sinners when He said, 'Turn' (Matt. xviii. 3); and, on the old meaning of the word, S. Peter must have submitted to a double conversion when Christ said to him, 'When once thou hast turned again, stablish thy brethren' (Luke xxii. 32). Dr. Matthews sums up the position splendidly when he says:

'The noble word "conversion" has been degraded by base uses. The so-called converted man is too often nothing more than a person with violent prejudices and a strong conviction of his own saintliness; or what is described as the experience of conversion may be simply a

stirring of unreasoning emotion easily explicable by crowd psychology and mass suggestion. Conversion, as the New Testament understands it, and as Christians ought to understand it, is neither of these things. It is the placing of the Christ ideal at the centre of the life, the unification of the self round Him.' [1]

With the new understanding of the mind of man under the light of Psychology, Conversion is being rescued from its perilous position of neglect by the clearer conception of what its real significance implies. The need of psychological rebirth, almost forgotten by the Churches, is being rediscovered by Psychology.

This need is found in all the great religions. 'Every great religion, with the possible exception of Confucianism, has come into the world with a promise of salvation for the individual as a Preaching of Redemption.' [1] Wherever man seeks God there are conversions, gradual or sudden, calm or vivid, of young and old, of educated and uneducated, of rich and poor. Buddha under his bo-tree passes through the same psychological experiences as Bunyan in Bedford Jail. There are years of unrest and longing for a unified life, the feeling of coming into vital touch with a supernatural power, which resolves the life into harmony and peace. Plato describes a mild form of the same experience in the *Republic* (Book 7):

'As the eye cannot turn away from darkness without the whole body, so when the eye of the soul is turned round, the whole soul must be turned from the world of generation into that of being and become able to endure the sight of being and of the brightest and best being – that is to say, of the good. This is conversion.'

[1] Matthews, p. 166.

The records of the Eleusinian Mysteries are full of similar experiences; Moslem and Hindu literature abound in them. From an examination of the whole of religious literature it looks as though the only common element in religious conversions is the birth of a new and dominant affection. That affection may be good, bad or indifferent, the experience of harmony seems to be the same. And a great amount of critical thought must be given to every case before it can be pronounced healthy and real. An experience of such universality may take many spurious forms.

A startling revelation of Psychology is found in the Counter-Conversions from Faith, through a period of agonizing struggle, to a state of repose in Natural religion or even in Scepticism. The new affection is an all-dominating love of Truth. Harriet Martineau attained peace and 'unification of self' in the acceptance of Atheism.

'Jouffroi, the philosopher, a man of blameless life, had been reared in the Catholic faith and had embraced it with fervour, but after a great spirit-quake, he definitely turned his back on Christianity, thenceforth never felt the smallest desire to believe; and, in dying, bade that the shutters of his windows should be closed to exclude every ray of light so that he might expire in darkness. He had already, years before, shut the shutters of his soul, quite honestly, to the sunshine of the Faith, because he felt that he could find repose for his soul groping philosophy, not resting on Revelation. Such a soul does find repose and assurance in its negation of Revelation.' [1]

We have therefore to ask ourselves what is the common psychological experience which takes place under the birth of a new and dominant affection in the process of conversion.

[1] Baring-Gould, *The Evangelical Revival*, pp. 124, 125.

'The essential thing about conversion is just the unification of character, the achievement of a new self. The process may have many by-products of an emotional nature, it may express itself in varying intellectual forms, it may be gradual or seemingly sudden, but the really important and the only essential part of it is just this new birth by which a man ceases to be a mere psychological thing or a divided self and becomes a unified being with a definite direction under the guidance of a group of consistent and harmonious purposes or ideals.'[1]

A definition of this sort includes those mysterious conversions from religion to religion and from sect to sect which are the puzzles of religious history; it includes the experience of a Newman and a Chesterton.

We can best study Conversion from the records of Christian experience. Among many minor differences Christian conversions divide themselves into two distinct types, the voluntary and the involuntary, the gradual and sudden, the evolutionary and the revolutionary, the nurtural and the cataclysmic. In the volitional type the regenerative change is gradual, and consists in the building up, piece by piece, of a new set of moral and spiritual habits. But even in these cases there is an indispensable act of self-surrender at the last; as one of Starbuck's correspondents wrote: 'I simply said, "Lord, I have done all I can; I leave the whole matter with Thee"; and immediately there came a great peace.' The involuntary type is by far the more interesting of the two, but none the more real, as some people are disposed to think. It has been studied more fully and lends a glamour to conversion out of all proportion to the importance of its method. James thinks that racial characteristics may

[1] Pratt, p. 123.

have something to do with the process and that the Latins are more disposed to gradual and the Teutons to sudden conversion.

Let us examine the voluntary type first. It is to the credit of Dr. Pratt that he has rectified the American love of the abnormal and has given voluntary conversions their true place.

'I believe,' he says, 'conversion of the violent type is by no means so common or so normal an experience as most treatises on the psychology of Conversion would lead one to suppose. It is, of course, a perfectly genuine phenomenon, but its occurrence is confined chiefly to certain exceptional individuals whose personalities have become incipiently "divided," either because of real moral delinquencies, or unusually high ideals, or unfortunate surroundings, or because of some native nervous instability. In the great majority of cases detailed by religious writers or reported from questionnaires, the violence of the experience is in part induced by the suggestions of a conventional theology and in part is purely imaginary, existing in expression rather than in experience. I venture to estimate that at least nine out of every ten "conversion cases" reported in recent questionnaires would have no violent or depressing experience to report had not the individuals in question been brought up in a Church or a community which taught them to look for it if not to cultivate it. With most religious people conversion (of the genuine moral sort) is a gradual and almost imperceptible process, with an occasional intensification of emotion now and then during adolescence.' [1]

We have already seen that normal conversions of this type take place in adolescence, like the flower of a continuous

[1] Pratt, p. 153.

growth; they are like a 'kiss' rather than a 'stab'; and most of them have no highly coloured records to advertise them. Bruce says:

'Many of the best Christians I have known have told me that if the Pauline experience was to be called normal and necessary then they were outside the gate of the kingdom of God.' [1]

The Churches which believe in baptismal regeneration have set their seal to the normal operations of the Spirit of God from seed to flower; and, if Christian biography has any message to deliver, it is that the best results of Christian character have been obtained without a religious crisis; in lives like those of Westcott or Lightfoot we find that proportion of Christian character which seems to live in the pages of the Gospel. The shifty sands of emotion are not there; instead we find the strong and steadfast ground of Christian character; and a building of great beauty erected upon it with the height and the length and the breadth and the depth all equal. W. H. Channing describes the proportion and poise of such a character in *My Symphony*:

'To live content with small means; to seek elegance rather than luxury, and refinement rather than fashion; to be worthy, not respectable; and wealthy, not rich; to study hard, think quietly, talk gently, act frankly; to listen to stars and birds, babes and sages, with open heart; to bear all cheerfully, do all bravely, wait occasions, hurry never; in a word, to let the spiritual, unbidden and unconscious, grow up through the common. This is my symphony.'

With such people Religion is not an ambulance following the army and picking up the wounded, but a pillar of fire

[1] Bruce, p. 90.

leading to victory. At the same time we must not forget that although they seem to have a systematic healthy-mindedness in their religion and seem to move Godwards by an unhampered choice, yet there is always to be traced more or less of the three conventional stages of Conversion – a sense of unrest, and a longing to be better; a crisis and a sense of being in the grip of another power; and a final sense of peace and newness of life.

The distinguishing feature about the involuntary conversion seems to lie in the activity of the unconscious mind. Religious ideas and experiences are stored up there; the memory of some words of Scripture or verse of a hymn or of a stirring event may under stress of deep religious emotion burst forth in strange conscious experiences:

> 'Just when we're safest, there's a sunset touch,
> A fancy from a flower-bell, some one's death,
> A chorus-ending from Euripides –
> And that's enough for fifty hopes and fears –
> As old and new at once as Nature's self,
> To rap and knock and enter in our soul.'

Many conversions are the direct results of memories stored up in the Unconscious, as of a parent's prayers, Sabbath-school appeals, vivid sermons. Augustine's mother's prayers rose from his Unconscious Mind at the preaching of S. Ambrose in Milan: and throughout the whole of Christian history such experiences could be exemplified a thousand times. But it is necessary to say a word of warning as regards our attitude to such phenomena.

'People give pride of place to whatever comes from the Unconscious Mind. But this is a retrospective step if there ever was one – a step right back as far as the Books of Samuel.

People to-day seemed often inclined to estimate the importance of psychological phenomena – and not least, those which occur in the sphere of religion – by their distance from the conscious reason.' [1]

Pratt finds it difficult to see why God should choose to communicate with a split-off complex or a brain cell rather than with the man himself. What is highest in the religious genius is to be sought in his conscious rather than in some form of insensibility. These are warnings against the one-sided views to which James was somewhat inclined and to which American literature on the subject has until lately been guilty.

At the same time we are bound to admit that most of the recorded conversions are of this involuntary nature as the result of 'unconscious cerebration.' Among those who are found recorded are the names of S. Paul and S. Augustine; and no one can doubt the reality of the process. This incubation in the Unconscious is best described in Jung's account of the conversion of S. Paul, an account which seems to cover the psychological processes of that mysterious event.

'S. Paul,' he writes, 'had already been a Christian for a long time, but unconsciously; hence his fanatical resistance to the Christians, because fanaticism exists chiefly in individuals who are compensating for secret doubts. The incident of his hearing the voice of Christ on his way to Damascus marks the moment when the unconscious complex of Christianity became conscious. That the auditory phenomenon should represent Christ is explained by the already existing unconscious Christian complex. The complex, being unconscious, was projected by S. Paul on to the external world as if it did not belong to him. Unable to conceive himself as a

[1] Barry, p. 132.

Christian, and on account of his resistance to Christ, he became blind and could only regain his sight through submission to a Christian, that is to say, through his complete submission to Christianity. Psychogenic blindness is, according to my experience, always due to an unwillingness to see, i.e. to understand and accept, what is incompatible with the conscious attitude. This was obviously the case with S. Paul. His unwillingness to see corresponds with his fanatical resistance to Christianity. This resistance was never wholly extinguished, a fact of which we have proof in the Epistles. It broke forth at times in the fits he suffered from. It is certainly a great mistake to call his fits epileptic. There is no trace of epilepsy in them – on the contrary, S. Paul himself in his Epistles gives hints enough as to the real nature of the illness. They are clearly psychogenic fits, which really mean a return to the old Saul complex, repressed through conversion, in the same way as there had been a repression of the complex of Christianity.' [1]

Numerous cases of this type of conversion might be given; but we must content ourselves with saying that such explanations in terms of the Unconscious do not destroy the idea of divine action, any more than in the case of a voluntary conversion when an individual comes up against objective Truth and surrenders to it. The only difference is one of method.

In all conversions there are three stages, mild and scarcely recognizable in some voluntary conversions, and clear and emphasized in the more pronounced involuntary conversions. They are (1) a sense of unrest, (2) a crisis and feeling of being in the grip of another power, (3) a sense of joy and abiding peace.

[1] Thouless, p. 190. But see p. 24 on the weaknesses of Jung's attitude.

The sense of unrest is the innate cry of the soul for unity. 'Who shall deliver us from the body of untamed instincts?' The whole man must be saved, the lower with the higher. This period may last many years, as in the case of Brother Lawrence, who wrestled with his divided self for fourteen years. It may be terribly real, as in the two years of Bunyan's divided life, which had been burdened by an induced and spurious sense of sin.

'Then was I struck,' he says in *Grace Abounding* (pp. 164, 165,) 'into a very great trembling, insomuch that I could for whole days together feel my very body as well as my mind to shake and totter under the sense of this dreadful judgment of God. I felt also such a clogging and heat at my stomach, by reason of this my terror, that I was, specially at some times, as if my breast bone would split asunder. Then I thought of that concerning Judas, who by his falling headlong burst asunder, "and all his bowels gushed out." – Thus did I twine and shrink under the burden that was upon me, so that I could neither stand nor go nor lie either at rest or quiet.'

Such mental distress and sense of sinfulness, with introspection, depression and estrangement from God, are found in every degree of strength and arise out of a deep inner need. Some people fear the removal of hell fire from our theology. The longing for redemption is not a mere desire to escape hell but is based on the profoundest depths of man's psychical being. Although some have gone so far as to describe their condition as 'a heart as black as coal' or 'a feeling of being damned everlastingly', that does not alter the essential fact. The best and purest characters have felt it deeply. They show us that Sin is more than the breach of social custom or ceremonial code, however much it may appear so in its earliest stages, and that Conversion is more than 'a change

of ethical standpoint'; Conversion to them is to fall in love with God and to unify the personality round Him.

The crisis arrives by choice or by incubation, and the Power of God is realized. Up to this time Christ has been kept standing at the threshold of the door. Now He enters in and gets possession of the throne of the heart and reigns without a rival there. Will, Intellect and Emotions combine in one act of self-surrender. When Brother Lawrence reached this stage he was in a wood, and was so affected by a high view of the Providence and Power of God that it never was effaced from his soul. It kindled in him such love for God that he could not tell whether it had increased in the forty years that he had lived since. Mme. Guyon was brought to the crisis of her conversion when a Franciscan monk said to her: 'It is because you seek without what you already have within. Seek God in your heart.' In a letter to him later she wrote: 'I did not know what He had done for me, for my heart quite changed, and God was there.' Kingsley, on his twenty-second birthday, wrote: 'Before the sleeping earth and the sleeping sea and stars I have devoted myself to God, a vow never (if He gives me the faith I pray for) to be recalled.' In the crisis a veil is withdrawn, a positive principle succeeds a negative; the soul consecrates itself to God instead of merely hating evil; narrow introspection is followed by enlargement. The 'Broken Earthenware' is repaired.

This production of a crisis or, as one writer calls it, the magnetizing of the needle of the soul, is of infinite variety and is conditioned by two important factors – one personal and the other social.

There is a danger of conversion to type, in spite of the patent differences of human beings. James hints at the danger in the following passage:

'If an Emerson were forced to be a Wesley, or a Moody forced to be a Whitman, the total human consciousness of the divine would suffer. The divine can mean no single quality, it must mean a group of qualities, by being champions of which in alternation, different men may all find worthy missions. Each attitude being a syllable in human nature's total message, it takes the whole of us to spell the meaning out completely.' [1]

'Variety's the spice of all our life
That lends it all its flavour.'

There are at least twelve gates into the City of God; and we are so easily inclined to forget it. The crisis in Conversion to God is reached along many different routes. 'The Way to Truth is one. But into it as into a perennial river streams flow from all sides' (Clement). In the Gospel these numerous ways are always beautifully implied by the words and actions of Jesus. To one He says, 'Go and sell all that thou hast'; to another, 'Ye must be born again'; to one, 'Come and see,' and to another, 'Follow Me'; to one, 'Behold My Hands and My feet,' and to another, 'Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?' There are as many ways to the crisis as there are different personalities in the world. All attempts at conversion to type are disastrous.

It would, therefore, be wrong to say that Conversion is a temperamental affair, as many are inclined to say. The artistic and Bohemian complain that they have no taste for religion. The Roman Church is inclined to take the other extreme and to ignore temperament all together, to the exclusion of such great men as Tyrrell, Mivart, Loisy, and Didon. We must not be ruled by temperament or ignore it. To those who are likely to be ruled by its dictates there is the

[1] James, p. 487.

witness of many rationalists who have accepted Faith, like J. A. Hill, Mrs. Besant, Robert Blatchford; and the claim of all the Religions to be Duty and not Inclination. To those who ignore the claims of temperament the whole of Nature cries out, from the common fly to the highest human creature, that what God has cleansed cannot be common. There must be a home for every temperament in the Church – for the ascetic, gloomy, nervous, sanguine, jolly, suspicious, etc. The Twelve Apostles were chosen after months of apprenticeship and after our Lord had spent one night in intensive prayer. Among them we find the impulsive S. Peter, the bigot S. Simon, the practical S. Matthew, the meditative S. John, and the sceptical S. Thomas. It was no easy task for S. Thomas and S. Peter to unite; nor for S. Matthew and S. Simon to agree. There is much to be learnt from S. John's words, 'Now Jesus loved Mary and Martha and Lazarus.' Temperament conditions but does not create the crisis in Conversion.

The social aspect of Conversion is largely connected with the place of emotion and of Mass appeal in producing a crisis. When large numbers of people gather together to listen to a great evangelist there are all kinds of undreamed-of psychological influences at work and; if he is not a great evangelist, but a man of unconsecrated hypnotic gifts, there are grave dangers before him. Mass suggestibility puts the gathering at once into an hypnoidal state. The affirmation and repetition of certain phrases by the preacher, the singing and ejaculations of the congregation, are liable to throw the soul off its balance; and in extreme forms like the Kentucky Camp Meetings, screaming, crying, speaking with tongues, dancing and cataleptic states are all common. The mind is drowned in a rush of feeling. Among negro races and low caste people of India such methods may be unavoidable, but they have

often led to disastrous results. Psychology condemns them. When a revivalist, with a powerful glancing eye and vivid descriptions of hell fire, overpowers his audience, blinding their reason while stirring their emotions, his methods are altogether wrong, and the consequences will be a morbid and unworthy type of religion. (We must not forget, however, that elaborate ceremonial, rhythmical music, light and colour, a monotonous voice, may also lull the mind and conscience to sleep.) Wesley's earlier work was not unsullied by these dangers. In December he left 800 members at Newcastle, and by February 76 had fallen away and he dismissed 64 more himself. Of a particular congregation, a pastor told Starbuck that out of 92 converts 'received' during a revival, 62 lapsed within six weeks, while of the remaining 30 only 12 stuck to religion for any length of time. Of 68 converts received in the regular course of Church work, only 16 lapsed within six weeks, while of the remaining 52 there were still 41 'in good standing' long afterwards. The larger the audience, the more suggestible it is and the greater is the responsibility of the minister. He must rely more on his matter than on his manner; and avoid the dangers of allowing the audience to trust in him (by Transference) and play on his vanity. He must remember that conversion is not complete until it has been accepted by the reason and worked out in the life; and this is impossible until the right foundation has been laid and the crisis has been wisely produced. We have to commend the truth to men's reasons and consciences as well as to their feelings. The preacher is responsible for suggesting the Truth and not untruth nor half truth.

'He must see to it, in his preaching and in the conduct of the service, that the congregation's suggestibility is provided with right suggestions to work upon, and not wrong

ones; that the suggestions offered to it are TRUE; that, at any rate in his mind, they are the result of right thinking, and are capable of rational justification.' [1]

If this is done, all the moral dangers of violent reactions, and of selfishness, which spring from coming to meetings to be moved themselves rather than to pray for others, will be removed from the congregation. We shall then not mistake 'the psychical for the spiritual and hysterics for the Holy Ghost' (Mason).

But, on the other hand, we have to remember that Conversion is not invalidated by its spurious forms. It would be quite easy to make the retort that spiritual coldness is due to the rationalistic and hedonistic society of the unbeliever. Numerous real conversions have taken place without the influence of mass suggestion in any form; many of Harold Begbie's characters in *Broken Earthenware* were converted at street corners; and many unemotional and intellectual subjects can be numbered among converts. If we are willing to concede the importance of gradual as well as of sudden conversions there will be no difficulty in realizing the supreme value and reality of the experience of Conversion in spite of the disastrous influence of some so-called 'Revivals.'

Emotion has its place, however, in producing the crisis; but it must never be allowed to force the pace nor to truncate the whole personality. Dull apathy has to be broken by the Inner Light of the Quaker, the fervour of the Methodist and the quickening of the Oxford Movement; but the great appeal must be made to the whole man – Mind, Feeling and Will. A true revival

'would appeal at once to man's threefold nature. It would seek to illumine his mind, to quicken his emotions, and to

[1] Hardman, p. 129.

train his Will to instant obedience in Christian service. It would maintain the balance between instruction and feeling; not permitting emotional excess to obscure intellect, and not permitting intellect to quench or deaden emotion. It would give us an age of supremacy of the Spirit which would supersede the present supremacy of Sensuousness. Scripture abounds in intimations of a coming day of which this will be the great outstanding feature.' [1]

The third stage in Conversion is a sense of peace and newness of life, arising from the unification of the personality. In the words of Lacordaire: 'It is a sublime moment, the one in which the flash of light enters the soul and binds to a common centre the threads which had remained disconnected. There is always such an insuperable distance between the moment following and the moment preceding the flash, between what one was before and what one is after, that the word "peace" has been invented to explain this magical stroke of lightning from above. He who has not had the experience has not known human Life.' Or in the ecstatic experience of the converted preacher:

'O Glory of the lighted mind,
How dead I'd been, how dumb, how blind.
The station brook, to my new eyes,
Was babbling out of Paradise;
The waters rushing from the rain
Were singing: Christ has risen again.
I thought all earthly creatures knelt
From rapture of the joy I felt.
The narrow station wall's brick ledge,
The wild hop withering in the hedge,

[1] Bruce, pp. 137, 138.

The lights in huntsman's upper storey,
Were parts of an eternal glory,
Were God's eternal garden flowers.
I stood in bliss at this for hours.'

MASEFIELD, 'Everlasting Mercy.'

Deeper insight has dawned on the consciousness; there is a sense of the joy of feeling oneself part of the redemptive purpose of God and not a mere item in Creation with no goal in view. In fact, the whole personality sings a song of freedom because it has ceased to wage civil war; in the words of S. Augustine, sung immediately after his conversion: 'O Lord, I am Thy servant; I am Thy servant, and the son of Thy handmaid; Thou hast broken my bonds in sunder. I will offer to Thee the sacrifice of praise. Now was my soul free from the biting cares of canvassing and getting, and weltering in filth, and scratching off the itch of lust. And my infant tongue spake freely to Thee, my brightness, and my riches, and my health, the Lord my God.' [1]

We conclude this chapter by reminding the reader of the limitations of psychology in dealing with such a profound subject as Conversion. We have traced the process of being 'born again' as it reveals itself in the experience of those who have been converted, but we can say nothing about that part of the experience implied in the phrase 'born from above'; that is the province of religion. But enough has been said to show that Psychology can be of great service to religion by showing the inner need of conversion and of rebirth and of warning us against spurious methods and forms which bring religion into disgrace.

[1] *Confessions*, c. 9, 1.

CHAPTER SIX

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF PRAYER

If Psychology cannot reveal anything but a limited and schematic view of Conversion, it cannot penetrate into the profound depths of the secrets of Prayer. It has nothing to do with the spiritual values of the prayer life, or with the peremptory demands to the Christian to 'pray without ceasing'; it does not even deal with objections to Prayer. Its task is a lowly but a necessary one; to collect facts about the mind at prayer, to investigate the world-wide belief in Prayer, to examine Prayer as an experience. Scientists are able to give the exact composition of a human tear, but that does not exhaust the full content of the living experience of shedding a tear. The 'transcendental element' of Prayer is not part of psychological investigation. The utmost that a psychological study of Prayer and religious experience may be expected to yield is a description of Prayer phenomena. A description, however, is not an explanation; when we attempt to move from description to explanation, we pass the bounds of psychological inquiry and enter into the realm of philosophy and metaphysics. Of course Psychology can draw tentative explanations from its survey of the experience of those who pray, but they are only tentative and await the decision of religion and theology for their verification.

Prayer reveals itself as an imperative psychological need in the history of religion. Although its forms are varied and its motives many, its need is one and universal. It may seek to avert the wrath of the Deity or to gain communion with Him or merely ask some favour, as in the words of the Greek poet:

'In all thou dost first let thy prayers ascend
And to the gods thy labours first commend,
From them implore success and hope a prosperous end.'

It may be occasional and intermittent, as among the Primitive races, or regular and careful of rules and posture, place, language and clothing, as among the more advanced peoples; yet it has the inner urge within it, which shows that it is not something artificial but grounded in the real nature of man; it is 'the spontaneous outgrowth of man's elemental needs.' It is frequently accompanied by strange ritual, as by the prayer drums and prayer mills of Tibet, which bring it into ridicule. Nevertheless to the psychologist these matters are proof of the depth of the instinctive craving for an answer to the cry of the human soul. Buddha avoided prayer, but Buddhists have been compelled to set up his image and pray to him. The Jains boast of such a degree of mastery as to be above asking for things; lot to them is regarded as fixed by Karma; yet they are compelled to turn to powers outside for help. Man is driven to God by his ultimate sense of dependence:

> 'There is no God, the foolish saith,
> But none, there is no sorrow,
> And Nature oft the cry of faith
> In bitter need will borrow.
> Eyes that the Preacher could not school,
> By wayside graves are raised,
> And lips cry "God be pitiful"
> That ne'er said "God be praised." '

The history of Prayer is the history of Religion; and from the first prayer, which was urged by the primitive instincts of wonder and of fear, to the highest development in the Lord's Prayer, which takes within its scope the whole personality of man, there is an increasing expression of man's deepest need.

Psychology records another important fact from its review

of the history of Prayer; there is, on the whole, an inexplicable rise in the quality of Prayer.

If we accept the old theory of Frazer that Prayer came after an intervening period of Magic, as the 'despair of Magic' or 'grew out of Magic' as Marett says in *From Spell to Prayer*, the problem takes its strongest form.[1] What caused this inexplicable rise? Or if we accept the modern view that Magic and Prayer arose from the same root, with Selbie and Pratt, we have to explain why Prayer developed from a very low form to a higher, and why many peoples who had fallen into Magic suddenly returned to Prayer. Prayer became propitiatory, Magic coercive; Prayer was social and religious, Magic anti-social and anti-religious. And in spite of the fact that we are always in danger of falling back into charms and mascots under the strain of a crisis like the Great War, or into vain repetitions and unmeaning formulæ, the problem remains as to why religion has increased and Magic has declined. Contrast the spirit of the early magical formulæ with words like these: 'Without Thee, O Lord, what were the portion of the King whom Thou lovest, whose name Thou callest as it seemed good to Thee? Thou directest his being and guidest him in a righteous way. I am Thine obedient prince, the creation of Thine hand. Thou hast created me and hast entrusted me with the rulership of all peoples. According to Thy kindness, O Lord, with which Thou carest for all of them, cause Thy majestic rule to be merciful and fear of Thy divinity cause to be in my heart. Grant me what seems good

[1] Pratt, p. 312 : 'Granted that out of the original feeling for the impersonal MANA the belief in personal powers arose, direct appeal to them was surely the most natural thing in the world. And if we are to consider the matter causally rather than chronologically, surely this is the most obvious and probable explanation of the rise of Prayer.'

to Thee' (Prayer of Nebuchadnezzar to Marduk). Or 'Beloved Pan, and all ye other gods that haunt this place, give me beauty in the inward soul, and may the outward and the inward man be at one. May I think the wise man rich. Give me so much gold only as the temperate man can bear' (Socrates in the *Phædrus*).

There is all the difference in the world between these expressions of a desire to be in tune with God and for a fuller realization of His Will on earth and the attempts to cast a spell over the Almighty and to dictate terms to Him. Psychology records the wonderful rise of prayer levels in the religious life of man, but leaves the explanation to others.

Everybody is agreed on the effect of Prayer on the subject who prays. In fact some would be bold enough to think that the new levels of character to which Prayer gives rise are sufficient guarantee of its worth: 'Whoso rises from his knees a better man his prayer is answered.'

> 'Lord, what a change within us one short hour
> Spent in Thy presence will prevail to make,
> What heavy burdens from our bosoms take,
> What parched ground refresh, as with a shower!
> We kneel, and all around us seems to lower;
> We rise, and all the distant and the near
> Stands forth in sunny outline brave and clear;
> We kneel, how weak! We rise, how full of power!'
>
> TRENCH.

The subjective influences of Prayer are so great that many who have lost faith in God continue to pray. The more advanced Jain monks have given up prayer altogether, yet many of the more intelligent laymen continue to pray because experience has shown them that Prayer, though inconsistent with their orthodox theories, is helpful in practice. To in-

vestigate the nature of this subjective influence of Prayer is one of the chief tasks of Psychology. First, by describing the general nature of the experience; secondly, by examining; and thirdly, by facing the problem as to how far such results may be put down to auto-suggestion.

The general nature of the experience is clear from an examination of the spiritual experience of all types of people who have practised the habit of Prayer, from the poorest crofter to the greatest mystic. It cannot better be summed up than in the words of Dr. Rufus Jones – 'spiritual energies in daily life.'

'The most striking effect of such experience is not new fact knowledge, not new items of empirical information, but new moral energy, heightened conviction, increased caloric quality, enlarged spiritual vision, an unusual radiant power of life. We are quite familiar with the way in which adrenalin suddenly flushes into the physical system and adds a new and incalculable power to brain and muscle. Under its stimulus a man can carry out a piano when the house is on fire. May not, perhaps, some energy from some source with which our spirits are allied flush our inner being with forces and powers by which we can be fortified to stand the universe and more than stand it?' 'We are more than conquerors through Him that loves us,' is the way one of the world's great mystics felt.' [1]

We have all come into touch with the praying man and woman, whose intellect may not be large and whose material possessions are still less, but the levels of insight and power and the quietude with which they look on their own difficult lot and with which they face sorrow and death have amazed us. They have attained to levels from which the sight of the

[1] Quoted Hardman, p. 87.

things of time take their true proportion. Bruce holds these facts up to the present generation as the great lesson of Psychology to Christian character:

'This is the supreme lesson that Psychology enforces. If to-day Christian character is not attaining to the personal level of former days, the means of cure can be found. The life of fellowship with God points the straightest path to the goal. Psychology is entitled to rebuke the members of the Christian Church who have not made a right use of their highest resources.' [1]

Not only does the individual find strength by a growing knowledge of the divine laws and of Friendship with God, but there is also the subjective influence of collective forms of prayer to be considered. The concentration of many in thought, will and desire upon one object has psychological effects of a conscious and unconscious nature which add great momentum to the individual experience. Collective intercession must be utilized to the full. Family Prayer is also of this pervasive kind.

'The children and the whole household subconsciously imbibe the spirit of Prayer. It grips and holds the young in after years. All the predisposing personal conditions are present. Natural affection, parental love, respect and esteem for parents and elders bring their cumulative influences to bear on the minds of the assembled household, both children and servants. There is an ever-present tendency to suggestiveness and to contagious sensibility of a deeply religious kind. The influences that mould life and character are there daily at work. Emotional states are begotten and maintained in which the seeds of piety easily take root and germinate.

[1] Bruce, pp. 167, 168.

The days of youth give the parent the psychological moment of highest influence.' [1]

Parental discipline becomes easier; the community receives new centres of spiritual life, and the religious stocks of our land, now fast perishing, may be restored.

We have touched upon the pragmatic values of Prayer in the preceding paragraph. It is only necessary to add the words of Luther, which summarize the effects of prayer in life: 'I have so much to do to-day that I cannot do without at least two hours for prayer.'

The most difficult psychological aspect of Prayer has yet to be faced. Are these subjective results due to auto-suggestion or are they due to some other cause? In order to answer this question we must consider the theory of auto-suggestion as worked out by the Nancy school.

Monsieur Coué has devoted himself with other members of the Nancy school to the investigation of the Psychology of Suggestion. To him it is essentially an inner process. All hetero-suggestion is really auto-suggestion before it has any practical effect. There is no need of an outside operator, even in hypnotism, except in the sense of the gardener who plants the seed where he knows it will best grow.

Suggestion is of three kinds: Spontaneous, Reflective, and Induced. Spontaneous suggestion is a phenomenon of everyday experience. It is overlooked because it goes on unconsciously. A light dazzles us, a melody fascinates us, until we may be half hypnotized by their effect upon us. The scent of certain flowers may call up the memory of a wedding day ; thought on good things, as S. Paul told the Philippians, will bring peace by suggestion. But we are concerned here more with its evil influence. As the old

[1] Bruce, p. 169.

villager said, 'My worst trouble's rheumatism and I shouldn't have had that if I hadn't listened to an old chap who had it forty years ago.' The very description of the symptoms had affected him. With some people the very thought of the Channel brings on sea-sickness. The lady who vomited every time she passed through Troyes was a victim of conditional spontaneous suggestion;[1] as was also the man who had daily paroxysms of dyspnœa, feelings of the presence of death, from 5 p.m. to 9.30 p.m. for five months. 'We may infer that the first paroxysm was genuine, and that the 150 others were unconsciously brought on by the patient's expectation that the trouble would recur at the customary hour.'[2] Neurasthenia is increased by the obsession of black ideas, melancholy, and a thousand fears which work unceasingly by suggestion, until an unbreakable net is woven from which the patient has difficulty in escaping. Bronchitis every winter and migraine on an At Home day have often an element of suggestion in them. During the 'flu' epidemic people were not helped by the greeting, 'Hello, you look sick.' By spontaneous suggestion the symptoms on patent medicine boxes are reflected into the reader. Tell a child that he looks tired and he begins to flag; tell him not to ride with his back to the engine or he will be sick, and travelling becomes a burden to him. If he cuts his finger and mother pities him instead of encouraging him to bear it, he redoubles his cry. Children see life as a great place of boredom or as a happy hunting ground according to the early suggestions which have been raised spontaneously in them; a child has even been known to find the origin of its vocation in the suggestions thrown out by the epaulettes of his hero uncle.

There are numerous other examples which might be given of the morbid effects of suggestion, from the less

[1] Baudouin, p. 105. [2] *idem*, p. 107.

complicated cases of illness by suggestion to the well-to-do idler who has time to suggest to himself that he has every disease in the Pharmacopœia.[1]

There is a way out of these false suggestions and that is by way of Reflective Suggestion. The lady who vomited at Troyes was cured by a single counter-suggestion, after one sitting with Monsieur Coué; the man with the paroxysms after three sittings. The Nancy school has a reason for its methods of fighting nervous troubles by healthful and educative suggestions. Its chief parable is that of the man who can walk over the 30-foot 9-inch plank when it is lying on the garden but who fails to do the same thing when it is suspended over a big city street. The imagination brings all sorts of overpowering suggestions which interrupt action. Monsieur Coué, therefore, proposes two laws: (1) 'When the will and the imagination are at war, the imagination invariably gains the day.' (2) In the conflict beween the will and the imagination the force of the imagination is in direct ratio to the square of the will.'[2] He instances the common experience of trying to remember a forgotten and familiar name; the greater the effort of will put into the attempt, the more the name seems to recede, but after the struggle is given up it returns as if by magic. Disorders are therefore to be cured by the education of the imagination rather than by increasing the capacity of the will. The problem is how to realize the conditions under which the

[1] Spontaneous suggestion sometimes leads to curious results. A butcher, for example, is said to have run into a doctor's surgery pale and agonized ; a heavy piece of beef had slipped and he was under the opinion that the hook had passed through his arm. On examination it was found to have gone through his shirt sleeve. A 'paralysed' girl learned that she had won the affection of the curate who visited her. She rose from her bed and walked and made an excellent vicaress.

[2] Baudouin, p. 125.

desired suggestion can come into being with the minimum of effort, or in other words how to send suggestions to the Unconscious Mind without the intervention of the Conscious Mind.

For this purpose it is necessary to ascertain when the unconscious mind is more or less accessible. There are three periods when the conscious mind is semi-dormant, and what is known as the outcropping of the Unconscious takes place: these are in sleep, in the period between sleeping and waking, and in reverie or light hypnosis.[1] At these times will, effort, and decision are in abeyance and there is the best available opportunity for influencing the unconscious mind. Reflective suggestion means, therefore, the education of the Unconscious under these favourable and impressionable conditions.

It is essential to take up the right attitude before any suggestion can take real effect. This attitude is called Contention. It consists of relaxation, which digs up the Unconscious in preparation for the setting of the seeds of autosuggestion. To put it in Baudouin's description:

It is 'neither "attention" properly so called (tension towards an end) nor yet "relaxation" (in the French "détente," i.e. the discharge or relaxation of attention). In contention, the idea is, as it were, folded back upon itself, and maintains itself in the field of consciousness without any sensible effort on our part. In these conditions, there is spontaneously secured that intensity of the idea which we set out to seek.

[1] Dr. Brown gives his experience of the result of a suggestion just before going off to sleep. He went to bed making to himself the suggestion that he would rise at 5 a.m. During sleep, when the unconscious mind was active in dreaming, he was doing an examination paper at Oxford. The examiner called out 'Time, gentlemen, please,' and the clock in the hall registered 4.57. He awoke and found his watch at that hour.

Contention (concentration) is a psychological equivalent of attention, minus effort.'[1]

When this attitude has been secured, the auto-suggestions placed into the quiet stream of unconscious experience must be positive. 'I am getting well' and not 'I am not ill'; they must also be creative; 'I may get well' is not creative; it has no helpful end before it and doesn't expect great things. They must also be general; Coué has abandoned detailed formulæ for such general ones as 'I am better in all respects.' 'It is passing off.' 'I am going to sleep.' The chief thing which people are inclined to forget is the state of contention; a suggestion made under any conditions will not work effectually, but under properly prepared conditions reflective suggestion can be a great force; so much so that 'the energy manifested by anyone during life is in direct ratio with his power for plunging himself into a condition of auto-hypnosis.'[2]

Induced Suggestion is another form of auto-suggestion, but this time under direction. The director seeks to educate the unconscious mind of the subject; and the chief method is by collective sittings. The Nancy sittings have about thirty-eight people at each. Certain exercises are used for preparing the mind to receive curative suggestions by teaching it the art of getting into a state of contention.[3] The patient's 'mind is tilled soil in which the seed can germinate and grow to maturity. Before (the exercises) it was uncultivated ground where the seed would have perished from drought.'[4] The exercises over, Coué is ready to make the requisite suggestions to his patients. He visits each one in turn and asks him to close his eyes, relax, concentrate with-

[1] Baudouin, p. 142.
[2] *idem*, p. 192.
[3] *idem*, p. 208.
[4] *idem*, p. 223.

out effort on the suggestions made. They are to be engraven within him. 'You will be hungry three times a day and will eat well.' 'You will digest well and sleep calmly.' 'You will be patient.' 'Your organs will work well and in harmony,' and then he sums up, 'In all respects you will enjoy better health in the future.' 'I am going to count three and at three wake up quietly and you will be better.' The sittings are continued and the patient must help himself at other times by the frequent repetition of the formula, 'Day by day and in every way I get better,' under a true state of contention.

The Nancy school claims that its methods are highly successful from a practical point of view; only 3 per cent are failures and these comprise the people who cannot understand the method because of weak intellect or those whose intellects are so fickle as not to be able to concentrate.

The first criticism of those who say that Prayer is simply auto-suggestion and that its effects are entirely due to the working of unconscious processes is found in the attitude of the person praying. In auto-suggestion the personality turns upon its own axis; in Prayer it is focused on God; thus there is all the difference in the world between auto-suggestion and faith. The man who prays seeks communion with God; auto-suggestion seeks nothing beyond an influence on oneself. Subjective influences are real in prayer, but only secondary to the search for God; in auto-suggestion they are everything. Prayer is always a duologue; auto-suggestion always a monologue. In the often-quoted words of Sabatier:

'Religion is an intercourse, a conscious and voluntary relation, entered into by a soul in distress with the mysterious power upon which it feels itself to depend, and upon which its fate is contingent. This intercourse with God is realized by Prayer. Prayer is religion in act; that is, Prayer

is real religion. It is Prayer that distinguishes the religious phenomenon from such similar or neighbouring phenomena as purely moral or æsthetic sentiment. Religion is nothing if it be not the vital act by which the entire mind seeks to save itself by clinging to the principle from which it draws its life.'[1]

Dr. Brown has paid special attention to the vital differences between auto-suggestion and faith.

'A year or two ago,' he says, 'I was treating a boy of thirteen for some disturbing nervous symptoms which interfered with his life at school and which he was most anxious to get rid of, by means of suggestion (after a preliminary analysis of the conditions in which the illness began). The first two or three hours of suggestion treatment, during each of which he lay passive on a couch, receiving suggestions from me every five minutes or so, seemed to produce very little, if any, effect till about the fourth treatment, when he suddenly burst into tears, and said in a voice charged with emotion, "Now I really do believe that it is going to be all right; I feel absolutely certain about it." From that moment his symptom (enuresis) disappeared as he became permanently well. In this case,' Dr. Brown proceeds to explain, 'we have an interesting illustration of a transition from suggestion to a state of faith. In suggestion the mind is passively stimulated to produce an idea and then this idea in its turn realizes itself because it has no competitors; it works automatically, by its own momentum as it were. In faith, on the other hand, one finds a state of mind which is essentially active; as William James said, there is a will to believe. It is a definite assertion or affirmation of an active mind. The whole mind is active and the experience is accompanied by an emotion which is something of the nature of volition, a determination

[1] Quoted James, p. 464.

to give oneself up completely to the idea for some reason or other.'

We ought to add that Dr. Brown thinks that auto-suggestion is half-way between suggestion and faith; and can do great things, but 'Faith is an affirmation of the entire mind.' 'We can say as a fact that suggestion produces results, that auto-suggestion produces still more permanent results, and that if genuine faith is aroused the most astounding results of a permanent nature may be produced.'[1]

Dr. Brown is speaking of faith solely from the point of view of psycho-therapy, but that makes his remarks all the more valuable. If faith, as an affirmation of the entire mind, is so powerful, what must it be when focused upon the Eternal God? The dangers of introspection are avoided; as well as those which come from an over-developed suggestibility resulting in dissociation and evil spontaneous auto-suggestions; and religious faith provides the highest form of that state of contention for getting rid of the effects of the Law of Reversed Effort. As the struggling sinner put it: 'I continued to fight my sin in vain but when I came to the Lord with it, it passed away.' The difference between faith and auto-suggestion also puts us on our guard against the danger of taking for granted the assumption that the ideals of religion and of a healthy-minded system of auto-suggestion are the same.

We have to admit, however, that some forms of prayer are auto-suggestions. While we reject the hypothesis that prayer is auto-suggestion we may quite well entertain the idea that auto-suggestion is one of its forms. Take, for example, a simple form of prayer known as ACTS. They are purely auto-suggestions and are quite different from vocal prayer

[1] *Science, Religion and Reality*; also *Hibbert Journal* (April, 1925), pp. 314 ff.

at the other end of the scale, in which the whole intention is centred on the Being to whom prayer is addressed and not on any subjective results. Meditation or Mental Prayer comes somewhere between. But Acts 'are simple auto-suggestions whose object is to strengthen belief or love, or self-sacrifice, or any other desired mental disposition.' Thouless quotes the following as an example :

'O my God, I believe with a most firm faith all those things which Thou hast revealed in the Holy Scriptures and which Thy Holy Church teaches. I believe in one True and Living God, my beginning and my end, and that in this One God there are three distinct Persons, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. I believe that the second Person, God the Son, became Man and died upon the Cross, to deliver us all from sin, death and hell. When I cannot understand Thy revelations I bow down my understanding and my will to worship Thee. In this faith I now live; in the same, by Thy grace, I resolve to die. Lord, increase my faith.' [1]

It must be said, however, that this example, taken directly from a devotional book, is not completely confined to auto-suggestion.

One final criticism must be made of those who think that prayer is nothing more than auto-suggestion, and that is in reference to the continuity of prayer. Auto-suggestion can never explain the fact of continuance in prayer. 'If in prayer-life there were no such thing as supernatural Grace coming from a real God in answer to prayer, would the habit of prayer survive amongst intelligent people?' [2]

'The number of persons who would be able to get any beneficent results from prayer once they had lost their faith in its objective nature is exceedingly limited. Few

[1] Thouless, pp. 173, 174. [2] Hardman, p. 74.

people possess the histrionic ability and the volitional control over the imagination requisite for any notable effects from prayer without faith, and few even of those who possess these abilities would think it worth while to make use of them in such prayer for the sake of possible subjective benefits. For every case like that of the unbelieving student who still continued to pray, probably fifty cases could be cited of those who had completely given up prayer because of loss of faith in it as an actual relation between man and God.'[1]

Rightly or wrongly, the essential element of Prayer in all religions is that of a new force which enters the soul from without. And this brings us up against the objective nature of Prayer, which Psychology deals with along two main lines: (1) The motive of those who pray, and (2) the experience of answered prayer.

There is not the slightest doubt that the universal motive of prayer is to reach an objective God who can act on our behalf. In its most agnostic and hesitating form it addresses itself to the 'Unknown God' or in the crises of life the agnostic says: 'I pray to the Power that holds this universe and me in its grasp. I know it is somewhere and can probably help me.' In its baldest form it seeks an answer to every conceivable human need. Muller's prayers were of the crassest petitional order. Early in life he resolved on taking certain Bible promises in literal sincerity, and on letting himself be fed, not by his own worldly foresight, but by the Lord's hand. He had an extraordinarily active and successful career, among the fruits of which were the distribution of over two million copies of the Scripture text in different languages; the equipment of several hundred missionaries, as well as the building of large orphanages and

[1] Pratt, pp. 335, 336.

schools and the distribution of large sums in charity. He owned no property except his clothes and furniture and cash in hand, and died at eighty-six after sixty-eight years' ministry worth £160. Here are a few of his remarks on Prayer as an objective reality.

'When I lose such a thing as a key I ask the Lord to direct me to it, and I look for an answer to my prayer; when a person with whom I have made an appointment does not come, according to the fixed time, and I begin to be inconvenienced by it, I ask the Lord to be pleased to hasten him to me, and I look for an answer; when I do not understand a passage of the Word of God, I lift up my heart to the Lord that He would be pleased by His Holy Spirit to instruct me, and I expect to be taught.'[1]

Such examples reveal the underlying faith that Prayer has an objective motive.

The experience of answered prayer justifies those who pray. Of 65 of Pratt's correspondents 17 believed that God's action was changed by prayer, and 26 felt the reverse, but 13 of these continued to pray in spite of it. The 'Messenger of the Sacred Heart' publishes monthly a list of thanksgivings for various favours and answers to prayer sent in by good Catholics from all parts of America, for recoveries from illness, successful marriages, increases in salary, the finding of lost property, etc. In August, 1919, the total number of thanksgivings was 4,876,932. All sorts of subjects were included, like passing examinations, the healing of sore fingers, getting good servants, good tenants, and getting rid of undesirable boarders. Direct answers to prayers of this kind are recorded on the walls and columns of the Church of Notre Dame de Lourdes in chiselled inscriptions, one of which is as follows:

[1] James, pp. 467, 468.

'A notre Dame de L. témoignage de profonde reconnaissance offert par la famille B de Constantinople comblée de bienfaits par le gain d'un important procès recommandé à son intervention.'

It might be too aggressive to assert that one attitude to Prayer implies that Prayer changes us, the other that Prayer changes God, but these people compel us to take notice of the objective nature of Prayer.

'When we consider the characters of these men who affirm the divine help, when we realize their simplicity and purity, their lover-like loyalty to truth, their humility, their daily service, their awe of God, their distrust of themselves, their wonder before mystery, their great tenderness of heart and their boundless anxiety to guide their brethren into the ways of peace, is there not much credulity in putting them lightly aside, as deceived and deceivers.'[1]

It is not for Psychology to say whether the nature of this objective side of Prayer is a change on God's side or whether it is only the deeper entrance into the mind of God through prayer; it is sufficient to notice that the objective side of Prayer is a vital aspect of its experimental side.

[1] A. Hoyle in *Expository Times*, 22, p. 489.

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF WORSHIP

An omission, as amazing as that of a Psychology of Sin, is found in the work of most of our leading Psychologists of Religion. Neither Bruce nor Selbie has anything to tell us about a Psychology of Worship. Thouless devotes a few pages, chiefly of criticism. This cannot be due to the large limitations of any psychological treatment of Worship – limitations which we found so embarrassing in a Psychology of Sin, or Conversion, or Prayer. The subject lends itself easily to such treatment and finds as much help from Psychology as from Theology; the cause of the omission seems to be found in the small field which Worship occupies in the mind of Free Church writers. We have to turn to Pratt and Hardman for anything like a clear and full account.

In a very broad sense all life is worship. We must therefore define what we mean by worship, in relation to God and in relation to our fellows. In worship our attitude to God is rather different from our attitude in Prayer. Adoration takes the place of supplication in us and we are more conscious of God's holiness than of His love. In order to obtain this sense of God's holiness and this spirit of adoration men have always worshipped in the group. Individual worship is possible, but it does not reach the heights of corporate worship. Private worship is more accurately described as prayer. We shall therefore think of Worship as the conscious concentration, at certain times, of the mind, the affections, and the will of the group in aspiration, praise and prayer.

Worship, in this sense, is one of man's innermost spiritual needs. Comparative religion reveals it. We have already seen that religion begins in this very spirit of awe, which is the kernel of worship. Rudolf Otto has called the world

back to this thought in his *The Idea of the Holy*. He reminds us that man has a 'numinous sense' which is a state of mind 'sui generis' and not to be reduced to terms of the Good, the Beautiful, or the True. Its category of value is the Holy. It is the unique feeling response, which can be in itself ethically neutral and claims consideration in its own right; the feeling of self-abasement into nothingness before an overpowering, absolute might of some kind. The character of the Deity cannot be verbally or conceptually expressed but only FELT. He is the 'Wholly Other,' who falls quite outside the sphere of the usual, the familiar, the intelligible and is incommensurable with the rest of our knowledge and experience. The positive contribution of Otto will be readily accepted by all thinking people; the transcendence of God needs emphasis. But the negative contribution which he has delivered to us seems to be unfounded. We need not trouble about the negative side. It is sufficent to point out that we have a psychological need for God as a Mystery, transcendent and all-holy, before Whom man from the most primitive times has stood in self-abasement. Such a feeling of awe we do not generally associate with ordinary human friendships, but in principle it is always present when one friend far transcends the other in power and goodness. Religion reveals the highest forms of this mystery. Of course Worship evolves in proportion as the mysterious Being is regarded as good and holy.

'We have come to use the words "holy," "sacred" in an entirely derivative sense, quite different from that which they originally bore. We generally take "holy" as meaning "completely good"; it is the absolute moral attribute, denoting the consummation of moral goodness. But this common usage of the term is inaccurate. It is true that

all this moral significance is contained in the word "holy," but it includes in addition – as even we cannot but feel – a clear overplus of meaning.'[1]

This overplus of meaning calls forth worship; and when the Deity is conceived as completely Holy, it calls forth true worship. The supreme fulfilment of these facts is found in the New Testament, and in the climax of the whole book, in the Risen and Ascended Christ. It was John Pulsford, the mystic, who pointed out the great difference between the claims of the Incarnate and the Risen Christ.

'The distinction,' he says, 'between the historical manifestation, known as Jesus, and "the Lord" is immeasurable. Having paid us a brief visit, moving among us incognito, in the time vesture of our own nature, He went down into the cold darkness of death and the grave, to undress and redress himself; and lo within forty hours He appears on the angel side of our nature. He rises less densely veiled, and rapidly becomes more and more glorified, more and more influential. Before the world began, as the First born, the Beginning of every creature, He was transcendently greater than Jesus, greater than any possible form of man which could appear in our planet, or any other planet. And now, in His assumed humanity, He is more than Jesus, He is "Lord Jesus," and "the Son of God with power" ' (*Our Deathless Hope*, pp. 133-6).

'The children of God should see that their thoughts of the Son of God are not held subject to the form of His humiliation, but rather that they are elevated to the conception of the Glory which He had with the Father before the

[1] Otto, p. 5.

world was, and which, as man, He inherits now, for evermore' (*Christ and His Seed*, pp. 8, 9).

When He appears the disciples scarcely recognize Him; He is like a ghost. When He makes Himself known to them He has a new note of authority and command. When He appears to the seer in Patmos He takes a transcendent form, very different from the picture in the Synoptic Gospels: 'His head and His hairs were white like wool, as white as snow; and His eyes were as a flame of fire; And His feet like unto fine brass, as if they burnt in a furnace; and his voice as the sound of many waters. And He had in his right hand seven stars; and out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword; and His countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength. And when I saw Him I fell at his feet as dead.' This is the Christ whom S. Paul saw on the road to Damascus; He frightens as well as fascinates; love and dread meet together at His presence; He is the perfect answer of God to that numinous sense in man, which we have traced from its sources and which craves for satisfaction in worship.

We have strayed somewhat into the fields of Theology but only to show the importance of this deep need of man for the 'Wholly Other.' The holiness and mystery of God draw men into worship. Every religion displays in weakness what Christianity reveals in power. Pratt takes us to Calcutta where he conducted many of his researches and describes a scene of this kind:

'The drums are beating violently – and wild music of strange sorts is issuing from the equally strange building. On the walls of the rooms are hideous images, carved in stone and daubed with red paint, one representing a monkey, one a creature with a fat human belly and an elephant's

head, each with an offering of yellow marigolds before it; while in the most prominent place is a stone pillar, rounded off on the top, wet from the pouring of much Ganges water, bedaubed with spots of paint, and surrounded with green leaves, uncooked rice, a few coins, and more yellow marigolds. There are two priests in the corner, beating tom-toms, and by the pillar stands a third, daubing it with more paint, pouring water over it, placing leaves upon it and all the while mumbling words – many of them mere repetitions of names – to which no one seems to listen. The noise becomes louder, and the old priest seizes a lighted lamp and brandishes it about in front of the much bedaubed pillar, while the audience follow his motions with obvious excitement; and at the close of the hocus-pocus he distributes to them some of the rice which has been collected at the foot of the sacred object.'

Pratt comments on such a scene:

'The most astonishing thing about it all is the attitude and aspect of the worshippers. For worshippers they indubitably are. Some of them have been standing, some kneeling, some prostrate on their faces.' [1]

They are under the power of the numinous sense in man; a sense which cannot be outgrown and which all the world over leads to worship of one form or another; the changing forms and symbols can never destroy the eternal impulse.

The other aspect of worship is social. Thouless seems to think this the important difference between Worship and Prayer. Prayer to him is a private and individual activity; in Worship we have a group of persons, trying as a group to get into relationship with God. If the Gospels

[1] Pratt, pp. 255, 256.

find their climax in the Risen Christ as the final answer of God to the numinous sense in man, the Acts and the Epistles reveal to us the completion of the social aspect of worship in words like these: 'And they continued steadfastly in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers' (Acts ii. 42). The fellowship of 3,000 souls must have been a tremendous impetus to worship. Or again, 'not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together as the manner of some is' (Heb. x. 25). Religion depends so much on the social factor. This is only the ripening of an inner human need. Anthropologists emphasize the social side of the origin of worship. 'Religion in its first form is a reflection of the most important group symbols and ceremonials based upon the activities incident to such interests.'[1] 'The religious acts are themselves an organic part of the activities of the social body. They are, in fact, social acts.'[2] This is all the more evident from the way in which religious worship persists in the most unexpected places. Though the Greek philosophers might believe what they liked, they scarcely dreamed of refusing to carry out the religious customs of their land. Ritual is not only a matter of habit but a matter of necessity. The long silence of the Quakers is a 'most dramatic and eloquent ceremonial';

'The Churches that started out with a lively protest against the dead ritual of the liturgical Churches have manifested a constant tendency to adopt definite forms of worship. We may with propriety speak of the ritual of non-liturgical churches. The members of the worshipping group think it strange when the regular order of service is not adhered to. They expect the singing of hymns, the prayer,

[1] Ames, *The Psychology of Religious Experience*, p. 49.
[2] King, *The Development of Religion*, p. 88.

the anthem by the choir, the announcements, the sermon, and whatsoever else there may be, to follow the habitual order and adhere to customary usages. Strange though it may appear, revivalism itself has been ritualized. In camp-meetings and revival meetings the methods and arrangement of the services are the same year after year, and the group consciousness that is developed at these gatherings is no less in evidence than in primitive man's great ceremonial occasions.'[1]

Social demands call for some sort of order in worship.

It is usual to divide Worship into two distinct types, objective and subjective, but this can only be done for purposes of analysis. In reality all Worship is only predominantly one type or the other; all Worship is a mixture of both types. Objective worship aims at making some kind of effect upon the Deity, while subjective worship seeks only to induce some desired mood, or belief or attitude in the mind of the worshipper.

An extreme example of objective worship is found in the Chinese official cult of Heaven, which can only be performed by the Emperor or President, who does it on behalf of the whole people. In the regular daily 'puja' of the officiating Hindu priest the objective element reaches its highest point.

'Quite frequently there is no audience at this ceremony – no one is present but the priest who anoints the lingam, or strews flowers before the image, muttering certain sacred words of whose meaning he often has no notion, and going through the ritual with the obvious single purpose of GRATIFYING THE GOD. Even when an audience is present the

[1] Pratt, p. 271.

chief aim of the ceremony is plainly the adulation of the deity. The worshippers come because their god wishes their adoration and they can, perhaps, move him to grant their requests by prostrating themselves before the throne where, in his sacred image, he is seated. For the Hindu temple is in no sense a "meeting house." It is not built for the benefit of the human worshippers, but for the greater glory of God.' [1]

Two religions of India show extreme examples of subjective worship – Jainism and Buddhism.

'For the Jain there is no God; instead, there is a mechanically moral universe, and there are also twenty-four Tirthankaras or ideal beings who once lived and have long since passed into Moksha. These are conceived as still conscious, but they are quite unconscious of human affairs; and can never be reached or in any way affected by human prayers or offerings.'[2]

'Buddhism, like Jainism, has two substitutes for God: one of them this miraculously moral but quite unconscious Cosmos with its inescapable law of Karma; the other the ideal being, Gautama the Buddha. But the Buddha has long since sunk into Nirvana – not only is he beyond all our prayers and offerings; he is not even conscious.'[3]

It would be a mistake to think that these religions are unmixed in their conception of worship. The widows who form part of the line of the worshippers, returning from the Temple of Shiva on the banks of the Ganges, take home with them some crumbs of comfort to help them in their subjective experience; and, as we have seen, Buddhists, apart

[1] Pratt, pp. 290, 291. [2] *idem*, p. 293.
[3] *idem*, p. 294.

from a small select number of monks, have been driven to set up idols of Buddha to satisfy the need for objective worship.

Christendom presents both types of worship. Broadly speaking, objective worship is more characteristic of the Catholic Churches and subjective worship of the Protestant Churches. The most extreme form of objective worship is found in those convents and monasteries which provide for continuous adoration of the Blessed Sacrament; the extreme form of subjective worship is found in the long silences of the Quaker meeting. But we may go further and point out some of the distinguishing elements of both types of worship.

The heavy duties of a priest in saying his daily Office *ad majorem Dei gloriam* are not undertaken for comfort or personal or collective effect. The Catholic Churches, which close the choir gates to the people, or hide their altars from public gaze, proclaim that the important thing is not that the worshippers should follow the service or be impressed by it, but that God should be properly and gloriously worshipped. A Catholic church is not a meeting-house, where people meet together to think about God, but a temple where they gather to render the highest worship. The Protestant may touch up his church with good architecture or fine colours or decorate it with flowers to attract more people or to make them feel happier in their meetings, but the Catholic vestments, acolytes, incense, music and candles are there for the glory of God. The same difference is found in the words of minister and priest. The minister no doubt intends that God should hear, but he also 'leads the congregation,' and utters his prayer in an audible voice that all may hear as he stands before the congregation; sometimes he exercises a good deal of personal ingenuity

in producing what he feels is the right effect by intonation and appropriate phrasing. But the priest turns his back on the congregation, faces the altar where God is, forgets all other worshippers, whispers his prayer in a mutter and in a tongue unknown to most of those present. A minister varies his methods according to the weather or the temperature or the topical interests of the day; the priest says Mass in exactly the same way whether the church be full or empty, warm or cold, interesting or uninteresting. The whole matter was put into a nutshell by Tyrrell when he said that at an early age he felt 'the difference between an altar and a communion table was infinite.' It is easy to see how impossible it is to fill up this need for objective worship with any merely subjective method, from the provision of extras like violin or 'cello solos to the most beautiful and eloquent preaching.

It must not, however, be thought that there are no subjective effects of Catholic worship. The Catholic can follow the liturgy in a translation; he certainly feels the beauty of the ceremonial and of the atmosphere of the church; and goes away uplifted. This prevents us from accepting too easily the sharp division of worship into two distinct types. There are very few people who worship altogether in one type or the other. Most worship is mixed and must be discussed as such. Protestants cannot follow the objective worship of the Catholics because it is rooted in a belief in the Papacy and in a doctrine of Transubstantiation to which they cannot assent; and not because the worship is particularly objective. To the rationalistic and free thought minds there must be other forms of worship; and the problem of worship is how to meet the needs of such people without surrendering the necessary objective nature of all real worship.

'The problem of the Protestant Church has therefore been to find a combination of objective and subjective worship that will plant and nourish the religious sentiments, enliven the moral emotions and, at the same time, will not antagonize the reason of its members.'[1]

'The difficulty with Protestant worship goes deeper than the surface, and until some more fundamental change is wrought, its mode of worship will remain always unsatisfactory. The worshipper in the Protestant church must be made to feel, as the Catholic feels at the Mass, that something is really being done – something in addition to the subjective change in his own consciousness. Let him understand that you wish him to come to church in order that you may make a psychological impression on him, and he will be increasingly likely to stay away. Or he may come to hear your opera singer, and his religious sentiment will remain untouched. If public worship is to be profitable to him he must find in it something more than that.'[2]

We shall proceed to some elements of Protestant worship which may be used in developing this objective attitude.

Hymnals must contain more objective hymns. Such hymns as the Doxology and 'O God, Our Help in Ages Past,' possess this element, but there are still far too many hymns which have as their sole aim the uplift of the individual. 'The office of song in the sanctuary is to praise God. Worship seeks the highest form of expression, which is poetry wedded to music, the rhythm of speech and song. Music is one of the art-paths to God.'[3]

Collective prayer is the most objective of present Protestant forms of worship. But much more can be done by developing adoration and acts of devotion and by con-

[1] Pratt, p. 300. [2] *idem*, p. 307. [3] *idem*, p. 301.

centration on God in silence. The right proportion of objectiveness can thus be obtained.

The sermon, too, needs consideration. A writer re-echoes what has often been said, that

'nothing would be so beneficial as to have our pulpits silenced for a year. The other phases of worship would be restored – the worship of prayer, confession, praise, and enlightened faith. Some of them are entirely gone from the Churches. The people no longer pray but listen to the minister as he prays.' [1]

But there is another way out. The sermon should be less a stirring of the moral emotions than a presentation of the big objective themes of the Christian faith. It should be an introduction to real worship by the painting of the great truths.

Ceremonial also can be used towards the re-establishment of real worship. It is a psychological need of worship. New rituals are only one of its manifestations. They foster and express the numinous sense, and reveal the need of a great re-shaping of Protestant worship.

A growing number of people are finding the centre of worship in the Eucharist. There the longing for objective worship of a social nature, which we found to be the primitive ground of all worship, finds its completest satisfaction, in the effectual and not merely declaratory symbolism of Bread and Wine. There is an appeal to the æsthetic sense by the beauty of the service; a great reinforcement of reality feeling which comes from sensuous presentation; a strengthening of faith 'by bringing powerfully into the mind (of the worshipper) the sense of social confirmation'; but there is more than these subjective elements. Symbol-

[1] Pratt, p. 393.

ism has its highest value here. Silence too is at its maximum; the soul waits for God and does nothing of itself. All the objective values are secured. The subjective elements are fulfilled as an indirect result of objective worship and fulfilled wisely. The emotional vagaries of individuals are checked; the communicant may not feel very much but he knows that God is there. It is not therefore to be wondered at, that a Free Churchman should find in the Anglican Eucharist a form of worship of a very high order:

'I know,' writes Malcolm Spencer, 'no mode of worship in which I am now less obstructed by the media than the Anglican celebration of the Eucharist. The different elements in the service so tone in with one another that each produces its effect without calling attention to itself, whereas in the simpler symbolism of a Congregational Communion service each item stands out stark and insistent because of its singularity. Moreover, the ministrant, in the Catholic modes of worship, because he does nothing unexpected, is less apt to intrude his own individual idiosyncrasies between my soul and God. There is no service in which I can so count upon being brought face to face with Christ Himself, with no distraction to break the intensity of my communion. There is none in which Christ is at once so great and so near, so much the universal Saviour of all men and the Saviour of my own individual soul.'[1]

Such a statement reveals the due balance of the subjective and objective elements in eucharistic worship, and its inherent power to satisfy man's need for real worship.

[1] Malcolm Spencer, *Impasse or Opportunity*, p. 53.

CHAPTER EIGHT

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF RELIGIOUS BELIEF

It is the aim of this chapter to show the manner in which Psychology deals with religious belief by an examination of the two outstanding and universal beliefs in God and Immortality. We are not to enter into the origin of these beliefs but into the psychological question as to why they continue and what is their nature as mental phenomena. The former work belongs to anthropologists and historians, theologians, sociologists and philologists; the latter to the psychologist. He takes mental experience in the raw and tries to discover the motives and processes which regulate it. And this is the more difficult task.

'It would be easy enough to collect from the creeds of Christendom and the dogmatic theologies of the theologians and from the sermons of the clergy many clear-cut and elaborate definitions of the Deity; but no one can for a moment suppose that these represent with any accuracy the living conviction of the mass of Christian people. Such definitions are almost invariably forms of words put together for the purpose of answering questions. They have a proper and important place in theology and philosophy; they may express what we ought to believe; they have their influence, no doubt, on what we do believe; but most of them are very far from expressing what God really means to us in our inner and practical living. Their chief fault AS REPRESENTATIONS OF ACTUAL BELIEF is, in fact, their very definiteness. The notion of God which most religious men and women carry around with them when not repeating the creed is far less clear-cut than are the definitions of the theologians. At a prayer meeting in a small village not far from where I

live the pastor asked those present to describe their idea of God. One good and very candid deacon, when it came to his turn, responded that his idea of God was "a kind of an oblong blur." The answer probably represented fairly well the state of mind of most of his less candid neighbours.'[1]

There are thousands of experimental ideas of God, from that of the child who looks on him as a patriarchal grandfather with a long beard to those of Whittier and Goethe:

'No picture to my aid I call,
I shape no image in my prayer;
I only know in Him is all
Of life, light, beauty everywhere,
Eternal goodness here and there'

or, as Faust views the world's wonders, the stars, the heavens and all,

'Fill up thy heart therewith, in all its greatness,
And when thou'rt wholly blest in this emotion,
Then call it what thou wilt,
Call it "joy," "heart," "love," "God,"
I have no name for it,
Feeling is all in all,
Name is sound and smoke,
Clouding the glow of Heaven.'

It is with these vital pictures, thoughts, and feelings with which Psychology deals in questions of Belief.

Bain has classified the Psychology of Belief into four divisions: (1) Authoritative or Habitual, (2) Reasoned, (3) Emotional, (4) Volitional, according as the belief is based upon the natural credulity of the mind, upon some

[1] Pratt, p. 200.

form of argument explicit or implicit, upon an emotional experience, usually of the mystic sort, or finally upon the will to believe. Pratt has collected evidence on both the belief in God and the belief in Immortality by the Questionnaire method. No one has done it more thoroughly or more critically, and we shall summarize his results.

We all began to believe in God because our fathers did; and because it has become a habit with us. If there is no serious thinking in later years the belief retains this primitive and credulous quality. It is the attitude of mental inertia, and is the most common of the roots of belief. It may take the lethargic form of those who prefer that anybody should do the thinking rather than they themselves. As James said: 'Our Faith is faith in some one else's faith,' or as a correspondent wrote: 'I believe in God because my father does and did when I was young.' It may however take the less objectionable form of handing over the thinking to some great and widely recognized source of authority such as the Bible, the Church, the words of a great teacher. 'I believe in God because the Church believes.' 'I believe because the Bible says so.' Twenty-five per cent of Pratt's correspondents admitted that their belief was habitual and authoritative, but this number should be greatly increased, as most people like to persuade themselves that they have thought the matter out. A correspondent who thought he had proved it from the Bible moves in a circle, presupposing the infallibility of the Bible as inspired by God in order to prove the existence of God.

Thirty per cent prided themselves that they had thought their belief out, but many of them should appear in the first group. Their arguments are various. Some take up the old lines of old-fashioned theology, and it is interesting how these persist in the minds of many earnest men and women.

'It is particularly the cosmological and the teleological (the world as Order and with a Purpose) arguments that seem vitally to affect belief. A goodly number of my respondents say they believe in God because they cannot imagine how the universe could ever have been started or could be kept going without a "Master mind" to make and run it. Sometimes these arguments are expressed conventionally and glibly, sometimes with a good deal of evident feeling. It would certainly be a great mistake (if I may judge from my respondents) to suppose that the cosmological argument has been dead since Kant's time, or that Darwin gave the *coup de grace* to the argument from design.'[1]

Others follow a pragmatic line of argument. 'My belief in God is from the argument of the lives of those whom I have known to have believed in Him, the strength of whose lives seemed to lie in that fact'; or in the other more personal form: 'I believe in God from the proof of His ability to help me.' There are hosts of people who find it easier to believe in God because they have seen His power illustrated in the biography of some missionary or religious hero.

Emotional belief seems to hold the largest place. There were 37 per cent of Pratt's respondents in this category. But there must always be an intellectual element in this type of belief to which emotion gives added strength. And many have mistaken feeling for the power of authority or the will to believe. Also this type is more keen on answering questionnaires and is least likely to be among the 80 per cent who threw them into the waste-paper basket. But emotional belief includes a large class of people and is based on a widely diffused type of mild mystical experience. It takes

[1] Pratt, pp. 212, 213.

the form of a simple sense of God's presence. 'I have experienced God's presence so that I felt the lack of nothing and feared nothing. It is hard to describe the feeling, but everything seems bright and clear ahead, and I feel as if I had the support of some great unimpeachable authority behind me for everything I may do then. It feels as though I were not standing alone.' 'At times God is very real to me. At such times He seems nearer and more real than any human being could be. At other times He seems real but more or less remote. There have been times in my life, beginning in early childhood, when I have believed myself to come consciously into the presence of God. Sometimes this has occurred when I have been in great sorrow or in great fear and dread. But sometimes I have felt His presence without any special reason for it – for example, when I have been alone out of doors or reading something that has touched me by its beauty and truth, I have felt a quick, glad sense that He was near, "closer to me than breathing, nearer than hands or feet." Such experiences while they last make me feel that I have come to my true self. I seem to understand life better for them. They are accompanied by no emotional excitement, only by a deep peace and gladness. I have never spoken of them to anyone. These experiences are not habitual with me, that is, they do not occur very frequently. They afford me my strongest ground for belief in God.' Some of our greatest names in literature record similar experiences. Mr. H. G. Wells writes in *First and Last Things*:

'At times, in the silence of the night and in rare lonely moments, I come upon a sort of communion of myself and something great that is not myself. It is perhaps poverty of mind and language obliges me to say that this universal

scheme takes on the effect of a sympathetic person, and my communion a quality of fearless worship. These moments happen, and they are the supreme fact of my religious life to me; they are the crown of my religious experience.'

The fourth class is least in number – only 8 per cent. But a respondent finds it difficult to distinguish this form of belief and may easily hold it when he thinks his belief is based on argument or emotion. Some of our greatest religious thinkers have travelled by this route, and join themselves with the lowliest who say, 'I believe in God because of the need of my moral nature. I need Him as a child needs his parents.' Belief in God can be actually produced by wish and nourished by repeated acts of will. The evangelist tries to make his congregation take the plunge:

> 'Only believe and thou shalt see
> That Christ is all in all to thee.'

By auto-suggestion the hearer comes at last to believe, and repetition of his will-to-believe makes belief more and more easy as time goes on. As a preacher said: 'By constant prayer to Christ, by acting and living on your faith, you will find your faith made strong; so that the longer you live the more you will see your faith has a strength superior even to the certainty of a mathematical demonstration.' This translates cold intellectual belief into a vital habit. As Pascal says: 'We have a body as well as a mind; and therefore we are not swayed by proof alone. Intellectual convictions are worth little if the mechanical side of our nature is set in the opposite direction; we must gain over our whole self. So soon as we know where truth lies we must ask custom to soak and steep us in that belief. For we cannot be always carrying proofs around in our minds; it is much easier to

believe by force of habit. This uses neither violence nor artifice nor argument; but all unconsciously it brings a certain bias into play, and into that our mind falls naturally.' St. Cyres adds on this passage: 'Pascal will advise his freethinker, at a certain stage in his conversion, to live as though he already were a Catholic. "Have Masses said and take holy water"; "naturally that will stupefy you and make you believe." This famous passage does not mean that a man may lawfully hocus himself into accepting a creed which he knows to be untrue; all Pascal insists upon is that our "machine" – our instincts, habits, associations – will never keep pace with our brain unless we call in custom to get them out of an old groove into a new one.'

A case reported by Miss A. E. Tanner illustrates the force of the will in producing belief. A woman who had experienced the presence of God lost her faith through the trials of her life. She remained sceptical for twenty years until a great moral crisis called for the old spiritual resources in order to carry her through. She deliberately set herself to recognize the sense of God's presence which she had not experienced for twenty years. 'I reinforced my reason by reiterating my reasons for assuming such a personality, and I prayed constantly after the manner of the old sceptic: "O God, if there be a God, save my soul, if I have a soul." Then one night after a week of this sort of thing, the old sense of God's presence came upon me with overpowering fullness. I cannot express the sense of personal intimacy, understanding and sympathy that it gave me. I felt the thing – whatever it was – so close to me, so a part of me, that words and even thoughts were unnecessary, that my part was only to sink back into this personality – if such it were – and drop all worries and temptations, all the straining and striving that had been so prominent in my life for years and

years. Then as I felt consolation and strength pouring in upon me, there came a great upwelling of love and gratitude toward their source, even though I was all the time conscious that that source might not be either personal or objective. It FELT personal, I said to myself, and no harm would be done by acting as if it were so. On the practical side this experience up to now – after a period of three months – has been permanent. I find my thoughts falling back upon the idea of this presence as soon as I get into any sort of trouble or perplexity; and the invariable effect is to calm me and to enable me to take a wider outlook.' Such an induced faith state may not be permanent, but it reveals the power of the will in the formation of belief in God.

This psychological study of belief in God is complementary to that which we made in Chapter Two, which was evolutionary rather than experimental. Together they show the richness of the roots of belief – vertically and horizontally. But we must beware of over-analysis. Our belief in God has a mixed origin and nourishment. As the woman said: 'Everything in nature seems to prove there is a God' and having said this to justify her faith by logic she adds: 'I cannot tell why I believe in God, but think argument and Bible reading have helped me to feel sure there is a God, and now I believe without proof or reason.' But we have seen the arguments from experience in contradistinction to the less detailed and vital methods of theologians and dogmatists.

The hope in Immortality is almost as native to man's religious consciousness as the idea of God. In the graves of the Palæolithic period traces are found of the custom of burying food and weapons with the corpse for use in the under-world. These customs have developed until they are universal. The lower religions illustrate the same hope in a

crude form. Some Australian tribes, for example, eat parts of the bodies of their dead to ensure communion with them, or cut the bodies of the living in order to establish a blood covenant, or even bind the corpses hand and foot in order to prevent their walking abroad to do mischief. The lower religions all show the dangers impending from the action of departed spirits. We need not be alarmed by the various forms which the belief has taken, from the shadowy ghost forms of early times to the distinctively Christian idea of the resurrection of the body; nor of the large variety of conditions from the happy hunting-ground to the New Jerusalem; the essential point is that man has been dealing with his dead from all time as though he regarded them as only removed to another sphere. There is a psychological need in man of such a hope.

> It must be so, Plato, thou reasonest well;
> Else whence this pleasing hope, this fond desire,
> This longing after Immortality?

What are the psychological sources from which this belief springs?

'The more deep-lying influences productive of this faith in immortality are found in the realms of feeling and will.'[1]

That is why Psychology has more to give to this belief than either Theology or Philosophy. Let us deal with the primary sources of Feeling and Will first, and then we can

[1] Pratt, p. 229. It is surprising that James refused to say anything on Immortality in view of the support which it finds from psychological sources. 'I have said nothing in my lectures about Immortality,' he says, 'or the belief therein, for to me it seems a secondary point. If our ideals are only cared for in "eternity," I do not see why we might not be willing to resign their care to other hands than ours' (p. 524).

pass on to the secondary sources of Reason and Tradition.

The expression of this feeling of the reality of Immortality takes many forms. Sometimes it is merely an inner longing for continuity: 'instinctively I feel that I am not to be obliterated'; sometimes it springs from a consciousness of being in the divine life; 'to be conscious of the divine life within is to know that life cannot die'[1]; sometimes it is an expression of the essential worth of the self or of some other self in one's thoughts: 'I believe in Immortality because I feel that I cannot live out all that is in me in one life time,' or as Goethe said: 'Do you think a coffin can impose upon me?'; or as Tennyson wrote of man's thought of death in general:

> 'Thou madest man, he knows not why,
> He thinks he was not made to die,'

or of the death of Wellington in particular:

> 'Uplifted high in heart and hope are we,
> Until we doubt not that for one so true
> There must be other nobler work to do
> Than when he fought at Waterloo.'

Sometimes it is an expression of the supratemporal nature of Truth, Beauty and Goodness, as in Blake's 'real and eternal world, of which the vegetable universe is but a faint shadow, and in which we shall live in our eternal or imaginative bodies when these vegetable or mortal bodies are no more.' Such intuitions cannot be defined; they can only be allowed to speak for themselves.

[1] This seems to be the same feeling as expressed by Harnack in his definition of Christianity as 'Eternal Life in the midst of time,' or in Dean Inge's words: 'The spiritual life revealed to us by Christ has the quality of everlastingness' (*Expository Times*).

The belief in Immortality is based largely on the Will. Most people want to live again.[1] When we analyse this desire further we find that with some people it is the horror of death which repels. One of the earliest recorded expressions of this thought was left some thousands of years ago by an Egyptian in his prayer to his god: 'Let not my body become worms, but deliver me as thou didst thyself.' 'I shall not decay, I shall not rot, I shall not putrefy, I shall not turn into worms. I shall have my being, I shall have my being, I shall live, I shall live.' This idea of putrefaction does not challenge the modern mind; nowadays it is the fact of annihilation which repels, as expressed in the following: 'I do not like the thought of empty nothingness beyond the grave,' or the thought of losing life and its increased joys of modern times. Our wills urge us to believe in Immortality also because we have a strong love to be with our dear ones and friends. As a correspondent wrote: 'I have always felt the most burning love for my absolutely devoted mother, and when she was so prematurely taken from me, it became the cry of my life to be with her'; or because we have a passionate desire for knowledge and to keep on knowing; as Thomas Huxley wrote to Morley in his later years,

'It flashes across me at all sorts of times and with a sort of horror that in 1900 I shall probably know no more of

[1] Pratt gives some interesting figures: of 65 answers to the question ' Do you want to live again?' 58 answered 'Yes' and 7 'No'; again, of 107 answers 95 preferred Immortality and 12 were indifferent; other figures vary according to the people among whom the question was sent, from 53·8 per cent to 83·8 per cent in favour of Immortality. Pratt concludes: 'I think we shall be safe in concluding that the desire for a future life, though not always strong, is fairly general' (p. 233).

what is going on than I did in 1800. I had sooner be in hell a good deal – at any rate in one of the upper circles where the climate and company are not too trying.'[1]

This demand for knowledge is only another form of S. Paul's desire to see clearly where on earth truth had come to him in the form of an enigma.

The part that traditional influences play in a belief in Immortality is often considerable.

'We may say truly enough that the explicit belief in a life after death begins with nearly all of us as a matter of teaching and primitive credulity. And with many a pious soul, untroubled by a disturbing critical faculty, the belief continues to be based chiefly on authority to the end of life.'[2]

This initial belief is strengthened by the general teaching of the Church and by the authority of the Bible and by the general opinion of religious people, or by the less orthodox 'expert authority of men of all ages.'

Reason also takes its share in leading us to a hope in Immortality, though with most people it is a small one. Some need such a doctrine in order to make up for the apparent inequalities of this world. Virtue is often unrewarded here and Immortality is necessary to requite it afterwards and to pay the balance due to it. Others find reasonable evidence in the findings of the Society for Psychic Research and kindred societies. There is no doubt that the names of such powerful minds as Sir Oliver Lodge and Sir Conan Doyle add a feeling element to those who reason along psychic lines. There is, finally, the persuasive argument of the essential difference between personal consciousness and the material world. 'Since the life in us is not

[1] Pratt, pp. 234, 235. [2] *idem*, p. 225.

material it cannot perish as a material thing.' One special branch of this argument has been worked out in the relation of mind and body, or even brain. We have no evidence of the action of mind apart from the body, but 'in the course of evolution the mind shows an ever-increasing tendency to free itself from physical control and, breaking loose from its bonds, to assert its independence and live a life undetermined except by the laws of its own nature.' Thought may produce changes in the bodily activities from the insignificant contrivances of the caterer to provide good music for his patrons to the psycho-therapist who changes the whole health of the body by a change in the mental outlook. Hypnotism, Healing by Mental Suggestion, Telepathy, Christian Science all point to the possibility of mental freedom as the goal of evolution. In fact the mind is always working for independence and freedom in human lives. It takes an increasing ascendancy in the life of the child. The mind develops more rapidly in some people than in others and assumes a greater action of independence, which can be felt in the great masterpieces of the world. The order of evolution is the amœba, the nervous system, and the mind. The mind may, therefore, hope to survive the destruction of the body and 'perhaps thereafter to find or create for itself a "spiritual body" adapted to a different sphere of existence to other modes of life.' Science may one day show that matter is only a function of some invisible force, and that brain is only a function of mind.

From these four psychological roots there springs up a great hope in the human heart of Immortal Life. We cannot enter into the forms which it has taken. It is sufficient to have seen the richness of its roots and to have illustrated the manner in which a psychology of religion deals with religious belief.

CHAPTER NINE

PSYCHOLOGY AND CORPORATE RELIGION

ONE of the greatest losses to the Psychology of Religion was due to the failure of William James to face the Psychology of Corporate Religion. 'In this course of lectures,' he says in his *Varieties of Religious Experience*, 'ecclesiastical institutions hardly concern us at all. The religious experience which we are studying is that which lives itself out within the private breast.' That would have been all very well had he felt himself obliged to omit it by the limitations of his subject; but we gather from his further remarks that he was totally unfit to write on such a topic. To him a church or religious group is either an organization in the interests of despotism or an arbitrary product of the æsthetic temperament. On the first point he says:

'A survey of history shows us that, as a rule, religious geniuses attract disciples, and produce groups of sympathizers. When these groups get strong enough to "organize" themselves, they become ecclesiastical institutions with corporate ambitions of their own. The spirit of politics and the lust of dogmatic rule are then apt to enter and to contaminate the originally innocent thing';[1]

on the second point:

'I promised to say nothing of ecclesiastical systems in these lectures. I may be allowed, however, to put in a word at this point on the way in which their satisfaction of certain æsthetic needs contributes to their hold on human

[1] James, p. 335.

nature. Although some persons aim most at intellectual purity and simplification, for others RICHNESS is the supreme imaginative requirement. When one's mind is strongly of this type, an individual religion will hardly serve the purpose. The inner need is rather of something institutional and complex, majestic in the hierarchic interrelatedness of its parts, with authority descending from stage to stage, and at every stage objects for adjectives of mystery and splendour, derived in the last resort from the Godhead who is the fountain and culmination of the system.'[1]

Since James wrote these words, however, there has been a great advance in psychological study of the Group Mind and of the instincts which lie behind it, and the Psychology of Corporate Religion has been lifted from the casual and incidental treatment of some of our early writers to a really scientific investigation.

We must first of all try to summarize two points of view represented in modern Psychology. One is found in Dr. McDougall's *The Group Mind*, and the other in E. D. Martin's *Psychology*. The thesis of Dr. McDougall is clearly stated in his Introduction. He maintains that a society, when it enjoys a long life and becomes highly organized, acquires a structure and qualities which are largely independent of the qualities of the individuals who enter into its composition and take part for a brief time in its life. The Group is not a crowd – that unorganized mass of people controlled by limitation and suggestion. In fact, the mere crowd is the raw product of the herd instinct. It has a collective life and a temporary common interest, which may take every possible form, from the less defined interest of a mob suddenly aroused by a rumour of tyranny, to

[1] James, pp. 459, 460.

the well-defined interest of a political meeting or concert. Its collective emotions are crude, simple and elementary. The individual loses his sense of responsibility in the flood of emotion, and by his diminution of the sense of personal concern as a member of the mass rather than as one individual standing alone with a reputation to lose. It is amazing what men will do in the herd.

'Thus men, when members of a crowd, will witness with enjoyment scenes of brutality and suffering which, under other circumstances, they would turn away from, or would seek to terminate. To see a man thrown heavily to the ground is not pleasing to most individuals; yet the spectacle provokes roars of delight from the crowd at a football match. How many of the spectators who, as members of a crowd, hugely enjoy looking on at a prize-fight or a bull-fight, would shrink from witnessing it as isolated individuals ! How many boys will join with a crowd of others in cruelly teasing another boy, an animal, an old woman, or a drunken man, who individually are incapable of such thoughtless conduct ! It may be doubted whether even the depraved population of Imperial Rome could have individually witnessed without aversion the destruction of Christians in the Colosseum.'[1]

The crowd has no volition nor reason; it works entirely by impulse. Examples of the depths to which it can sink are found in the records of the French Terror or in the incredible brutalities of those exceptionally humane and kindly individuals, the Russian peasants, whom Maurice Baring was holding up as virtuous while the papers were describing their atrocious barbarities (1906). To sum up, the simple crowd is excessively emotional, impulsive, violent,

[1] McDougall, p. 40.

fickle, inconsistent, irresolute and extreme in action, displaying only the coarser emotions and the less refined sentiments; extremely suggestible, careless in deliberation, hasty in judgment, incapable of any but the simpler and imperfect forms of reasoning; easily swayed and led, lacking in self-consciousness, devoid of self-respect and of sense of responsibility, and apt to be carried away by the consciousness of its own force, so that it tends to produce all the manifestations we have learnt to expect of any irresponsible and absolute power. Hence its behaviour is like that of an unruly child or an untutored passionate savage in a strange situation, rather than like that of its average member; and in the worst cases it is like that of a wild beast, rather than like that of human beings.

Group life and Herd life stand out in the boldest contrast, though there may be an infinite number of degrees between the mere herd and the fully organized group. The group has a conscious common purpose which demands some degree of continuity; the crowd has no conscious purpose and no continuity. The group is organized and each member has his different function to perform; the crowd has no organization and every member of it is reduced to a dead level, in which individual distinctions, initiative and thought are dissolved. The group is enriched in its life by the formation of subgroups which minister to the increased usefulness of the archgroup; the crowd has no such possibilities of enrichment. The group share faith in their leader or leaders and are thus able to maintain consistent loyalty over long periods; the crowd is the victim of any leader who may be strong enough to exploit its emotions and only for so long as he can do so. We may elaborate these contrasts a little further.

Group purpose and continuity go together. National

consciousness in the French nation, during the years of revolution, saved it from dissolution.

'When the excesses of the French Revolution excited all the monarchies of Europe to attack France, the French nation, becoming animated with the one strong purpose of asserting its right to exist and to choose its own form of government, successfully drove back all its enemies and rose to a height of power and glory greater than at any other period.'[1]

Our search for a force like that which brought us all together in the war – a moral equivalent of war – shows the powerful force of a common purpose. But there has always been a more or less clearly understood purpose behind such a long enduring group as the British Empire, with its unbroken continuity, and its law and custom and tradition which have gathered themselves into the imperial purpose.

The individual in the group becomes more than himself and is lifted up to a higher plane than he could reach by his own effort. This springs entirely from group self-consciousness or esprit de corps. The public school owes half its influence on the individual boy to this spirit. The ordinary raw emotions are crowned with special group volition and reason of a high type.

'The collective actions of the well-organized group, instead of being, like those of a simple crowd, merely impulsive or instinctive actions implying a low degree of intelligence and of morality far inferior to that of the average individual of the crowd, become truly volitional actions expressive of a high degree of intelligence and morality

[1] McDougall, p. 142.

much higher than that of the average member of the group – i.e. the whole is raised above the level of its average member and even by reason of the exaltation of emotion and organized co-operation in deliberation above that of its highest members. The group spirit plays an important part in raising the intellectual level of the group. Each member then, willing the common end, accepts the means chosen by the organized collective deliberation, and in executing the actions prescribed for him makes them his own immediate ends and truly wills them for the sake of the whole, not executing them in the spirit of merely mechanical and unintelligent obedience or even of reluctance.'[1]

The individual has a sense of responsibility for the good of the group and for the approval of his fellows in extending that good.

The possibility of subgroups within a larger and more inclusive group is well illustrated from university group life. The sentiment for the whole university is not hindered by the sentiment of a single college. The very rivalries of the colleges within the university enrich the larger group.

'The same is true in a less degree of the universities themselves. Oxford and Cambridge have, partly in consequence of their proximity and close intercourse, developed on closely parallel lines. They are, therefore, so similar in constitution and aims as to be keen though friendly rivals. This has been of great benefit to both, the self-knowledge and group sentiment of each having been greatly promoted by this close intercourse, rivalry and mutual criticism. And this rivalry has not prevented the growth of some sentiment for the larger group constituted by the members

[1] McDougall, pp. 53, 63.

of both universities, each of whom is always ready to defend the common interests of the larger group against the rest of the world.'[1]

The mass of men need leaders.

> 'A people is but the attempt of many
> To rise to the completer life of one;
> And those who live as models to the mass
> Are singly of more value than they all.'

But there are many kinds of leadership; we are concerned only with the Group leader. In national life he is so important that, through lack of him, the negroes have never been able to found a civilization, and, through his continued arrival, the Jews have, in face of insuperable difficulties, retained their national consciousness. The Arab nation owes its existence to Mahomet.

'Would Germany now be a nation, but for Frederick the Great and Bismarck? Would America, but for Washington, Hamilton, and Lincoln? Would Italy, but for Garibaldi and Mazzini and Cavour? How greatly is the unity of national spirit and tradition among Englishmen due to the great writers who have produced the national literature, and to the great statesmen and soldiers and sailors who have given her a proud position in the world! What would Englishmen be now if Shakespeare, Newton and Darwin, Cromwell, and Chatham, Marlborough and Nelson and Wellington, had never been born?'[2]

Power, prosperity and unity of national life depend on the production of men and women above the average, who can spread among the masses the ideas and moral influence of

[1] McDougall, p. 94. [2] *idem*, p. 137.

the men of supremely great powers. National ideals are fostered and developed and the whole life of the nation takes a higher tone.

McDougall believes that he has shown the existence of a collective mind which is not merely the sum of the mental lives of the units that compose it but

'an organized system of forces which has a life of its own, tendencies of its own, a power of moulding all its component individuals, and a power of perpetuating itself as a self-identical system subject only to slow and gradual change.'[1]

In opposition to this view we may place that of Mr. Everett Martin. He regards McDougall's view as an idol and a fiction. Man, to him, is undoubtedly a social animal; and every man comes into the world as a member of a family or a clan or a community with the ready-made benefits of civilization at his disposal and with knowledge surrounding him on every side.

'And when we realize how many sciences, arts, historical facts, customs, manners, and religious beliefs, go to make up our culture, we see that from one point of view this culture may be said to extend beyond the mental life of any individual.'[2]

But none of these things has any value apart from a mind somewhere; and culture is really a co-operative affair of many minds. It is false to take up the attitude of a child to this co-operative society and to talk of 'Fatherland' or 'Mother Church' or of any sort of collective consciousness as though it were wiser than the consciousness of the

[1] McDougall, p. 9. [2] Martin, p. 252.

individual. There are no impersonal ideas; they all have to pass through a mind.

'There are no goods which are good for no one in particular; no truths which cannot and should not be called to justify themselves at the bar of some individual judgment; no wisdom which is greater than that attained by the wisest. The right of private judgment and the duty of it cannot be obscured by any worship of the group as such. The path of freedom for every man, as well as his greatest opportunity for social service, is to learn to think clearly, calmly, courageously, and alone.' [1]

At first sight it looks as though these theories are in violent contradiction. But a closer examination shows that McDougall describes the formation and content of the group consciousness, while Martin emphasizes its perils. One is a psychologist proper; the other is a moralist. McDougall has not paid sufficient attention to the individual, but it would be false to say that the group mind was a fiction in face of the evidence of the spirit of the public school, the university, the nation, and kindred groups. Martin has not taken the trouble to investigate the nature of this collective consciousness or he could never have dismissed it in a few sentences. It offers a distinct purpose to which the individual is bound in loyalty to submit; it presents the ideals of the group which raise the lesser ideals of the individual; it presents a duty to the individual, which lies outside the scope of his own personal life and helps the whole group to carry on its manifold activities; and it may have leaders which bid and call the several members to new heights of conquest. All these qualities are new to the individual mind and must be classed under some sort of

[1] Martin, p. 268.

group consciousness. They all win their way by the natural associative instincts which are latent in man, but they have also a volitional and intellectual content in the highest forms of the group. At the same time the individual must not be allowed to lose his identity in the group. He has a task to perform, even though with most people it may be nothing more than to ascertain the reasonableness of the group idea, and had McDougall been dealing with Individual Psychology and not with Social Psychology he would have made that aspect clearer. But the group is more than a number of atoms: it is an organism.

We shall now try to apply these principles to the Psychology of Corporate Religion, taking as our immediate subject the Christian Church. It was once said that 'The English people have not yet realized the idea of a Church.' But that seems to be rather out of date by now when we read such statements as that found in the *Documents on Christian Unity*, edited by the Dean of Canterbury. A Joint Conference of the Anglican and Free Churches begins its report with a paragraph 'On the Nature of the Church,' showing the importance of this subject and making the astounding additions:

'This one Church has its expression in this world in a visible form – As a visible Church it must possess certain visible and recognizable marks whereby it can be seen and known by men.' [1]

The Christian Church is one of the oldest groups in society. It is the most perfect form of sublimation and sanctification of the gregarious instinct. On the pages of the New Testament we find an organized group, not a conglomeration of atoms nor a mere crowd. The disciples have

[1] *Documents on Christian Unity*, p. 147.

a unity of purpose; they conceive of a continuity to the end of time; there is a life of high spiritual levels mediated by Common Sacraments, Worship, Scripture and the Ministry; and differentiation of function on the part of the members of the community is so clear that nothing less than the variety of the parts of the human body or of the grandest building can describe it. Subgroups enrich the life of the whole as in 'the local churches scattered about the heathen world, like oases in a desert, or, again, the small house-churches in a large town, such as Rome' – 'the whole Ecclesia is ideally present in the local gathering, just as the whole Roman Empire was ideally present in the group of Roman citizens residing in a given city.'[1] But its fundamental difference from all human societies lies in its Leader. The will and purpose of the Church spring from Christ Himself. The Church is His Body, 'the fulness of Him who all in all is being fulfilled' (Armitage Robinson). The relation of the Church to Christ is unique. It

'fulfils and transcends that assigned to the group leader by psychologists. He can be the object of faith, reverence, obedience to an unlimited degree, holding together the group by a unique bond of personal loyalty to Himself. He is also the supreme object of love, and it is in Him that Christians love one another.' [2]

It is interesting to follow the passages in which verbs and nouns take the affix *with* – and *fellow* – in the Bible. There are 'fellow workers, sufferers, prisoners, servants' who work,

[1] Hardman, p. 271. False grouping is avoided, as when S. Paul, prevented the formation of two sects, 'a Jewish sect observing the law of Moses, and insisting on circumcision for all Gentiles, and a Gentile Christian sect content only with baptism and the moral law, each with its own Eucharist and Agape' (p. 272).

[2] *idem*, p. 274.

suffer, strive, meet and sometimes live together. And that same use of the herd instinct finds expression in writers like John Donne, whose lack of catholicity makes it more impressive, when he says in his meditation on the passing bell: 'The Church is catholic, universal, so are all her actions; all that she does belongs to all. When she baptizes a child, that action concerns me; for that child is thereby connected to that body which is my head too, and ingrafted into that body whereof I am a member. And when she buries a man, that action concerns me; all mankind is of one author and is one volume; when one man dies one chapter is not torn out of the book, but translated into a better language; and every chapter must be so translated. God employs several translators; some pieces are translated by age, some by sickness, some by war, some by justice; but God's hand is in every translation and His hand shall bind up all our scattered leaves again for that library where every book shall lie open to one another.' A slightly different and less eccentric expression of the group spirit in the Church is found in an unorthodox writer, Dr. A. C. Benson: 'Human beings,' he says, 'have actually to combine together to save themselves from the blind working of the forces of God; and, in the religious region, they have similarly to combine together to encourage each other to believe in the justice and holiness of His nature, when an afflicted individual cannot discern it.' Corporate faith is a necessity of the religious life.

One of the most difficult problems of the Church to-day is connected with the relations of subgroups or sects to the main group. We may deal with it under three heads: (1) the Origin of the sect, (2) the Value of a sect, (3) the Dangers of a sect.

The sect generally begins in the first-hand experience of some individual. He is driven into the wilderness and returns as a lonely madman. He may be fortunate enough to obtain followers, and if his doctrine proves contagious enough to spread to others it becomes a heresy, with a definite label. Dr. Bicknell describes the process as follows:

'A leader arises, or a new or forgotten truth or principle emerges, and is welcomed by many minds. But originality is seldom popular at first. In a religious society authority tends to rest in the hands of the older members, as the very term "Priest" (– "presbyter" – elder man) constantly reminds us. These, as a rule, dislike unfamiliar ideas. They belong to the class of the stable-minded. Accordingly, in opposition to the coldness or hostility of the bulk of the community, the followers of the new leader or idea tend to draw together. Probably they form some organization to propagate their views, an organization that may cut across other groupings. There we have the beginning of the sect.'[1]

The sect is of value as a subgroup; in fact the Christian Church began as a sect or 'following.' Progress within the Church depends largely on the arrival of great teachers and leaders like S. Paul, S. Augustine, Luther and Wesley. Special and forgotten doctrines are emphasized and the Church receives new vitality.

A fresh esprit de corps has been created. Individuality has come to its own within the sect. The precious value of personality is recognized. Some flower of Christ's garden is cultivated with greater care. The dominating power of numbers is resisted. The force of the mass has less dangerous driving power. Liberty gets room to live. Originality

[1] Hardman, p. 277.

finds its opportunity. Until the Church attains perfect symmetry there will always be room for the sect. It is the duty of the whole group to be charitable in its judgments of the sect until proofs are forthcoming that it is out of organic relation with the archgroup and unfaithful to its own subgroup principle. The Church has failed mostly in the past in its neglect of the duty of integrating the sects. Many of them have been due to race or political causes, to economic conditions or other similar causes outside the life of the Church. And frequently, the Church might have been enriched in its group life by the recognition of the sect. What a difference it would have made to the Church of the Middle Ages if a stupid Pope had held the See when the poor little man of Assisi arose. Innocent III realized the value of the true sect. The religious orders in the Roman Church are in a true sense sects. They possess a highly developed life of their own, but always in loyalty to the whole. Their members are enabled to render an ampler service to the whole body by their association in their several orders. And there is no danger of schism. So, too, in the English Church we have societies, guilds, and movements of many kinds to foster and develop the various sides of religion, and these aim at making their members better Churchmen. Assuming that all such groupings are the organs of one single pervading life – the life of Christ – there cannot be ultimately any irreconcilable opposition between them. The large and important sects of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries might with a little care have been integrated into the larger group, with great gain and enrichment to the whole. When the Church has sought to impose unity on its members by cold mechanical means, it has denied expression to certain elements of truth, which have taken revenge at last. The Reformation was the direct

result of the failure of the Conciliar movement. Cautery succeeds physic. When the Council of Pisa chose a Greek Pope there was a moment when it looked as though the East and West were to be one again, but the wise sermon of Jean Charlier de Gerson was rejected for the iron military conception of unity.

We have to acknowledge, however, the possibilities of degeneration in the subgroup. A Free Churchman tells us that,

'In some villages in Scotland you will find three Presbyterian sects, all holding by the same confession of faith, all maintaining the same forms of worship, all singing the same Psalms. Yet on very minor points of doctrinal differences, rather on different interpretations of minor clauses in the same creed, they maintain their church, their preachers, their choirs, and their separate temples of worship. Worst of all, their divisions are often carried into their politics, and perpetuated in their social intercourse. The world looks on and laughs, and says mockingly, "See how these Christians love one another." '[1]

Whatever causes the Reformers had for emphasizing the need of a subgroup, there can be no doubt that their sons allowed the sect spirit to degenerate into a futile and unnecessary process. The hundreds of sects which sprang up became self-centred, negative, and antagonistic to the rest of the Church. The proportion of the Faith was lost; moral effort and patience found little to try them in the smaller and isolated community, and they were often in danger of a reversion to the mere crowd, led on by the most primitive impulses. All differentiation of function on the part of its members was lost; some had rapid success but died from

[1] Bruce, p. 237.

lack of depth; others hardened into schism. The same process which we find in the children of the Reformers is found in the children of the Wesleyan Revival – the heritage which has been left to us is one of extreme disorganization and division.

'The result is a waste of energy comparable to that which follows upon dissociation in the individual mind. Perhaps here we have the best psychological illustration of the present unhappy condition of the Church. It is the Christ-mind dissociated. While the Church needs all the varied gifts and endowments of all races and classes for the enrichment of its group life that it may fully express Christ, schism parts these gifts asunder into competing groups. Learning is found here, enthusiasm there, gifts of organization elsewhere, and so on. These qualities and powers are in part wasted because they are not supplemented by one another in the common group-life. The instinct of pugnacity that should be sublimated into conquering the world for Christ finds its satisfaction in fighting against fellow-Christians. So the world that should see in the Church the supreme group-force that makes for unity sees instead disintegration and conflict. Only a united Church can give peace to the world.'[1]

Psychology has something to contribute to the movement towards Reunion. It is all on the side of the cessation of the fissiparous process which has gone on from the Reformation until to-day. First, by warning us against the nature of party bias. Our religious divisions come down to us in the form of herd judgments. Such judgments have two peculiar qualities, a non-rational origin and a special

[1] Hardman, pp. 288, 289.

emotional tone. We shall never go back to the uncontrolled expression of impulses of this kind such as were every day occurring on the Continent in the generation after the Reformation. People said that fire and water would mix better than Lutherans and Calvinists. In Strassburg there were only a few Calvinistic families just after the Thirty Years' War. But they were not allowed to hold any meetings within the city itself. At Wolfisheim the Lutherans saw the vengeance of God upon them in a thunderstorm because they had ventured to help the Calvinists to erect a church, and the City Council forbade the Lutheran coachmen to drive the Calvinists to church. The Protestants and Catholics vied with each other in using abusive epithets about each other, until many felt the spirit of Melanchthon's last words: 'For two reasons I desire to leave this life: first, that I may enjoy the sight which I long for of the Son of God and of the Church in Heaven; next, that I may be set free from the monstrous and implacable hatreds of the theologians.' That day can never return. But we have not yet learned to distinguish between those herd prejudices and emotional outbursts to which they give rise and the principles which lie beneath our faith. We have an instinctive inclination to believe, in spite of the most overwhelming evidence, that our opinions are based on sound reasoning; and we have a strong aversion from mental conflict, friction or disturbance. The result is that we manufacture reasons or rather 'rationalizations' for our beliefs. Rationalization 'is probably inevitable; but, precisely because it is a process so closely connected with the great primary instincts, we should be continually examining our consciences to discover traces of it.'[1]

Secondly, Psychology calls aloud for reintegration of

[1] Hudson, p. 77.

these subgroups which are Christian. Moral discrimination is, of course, necessary; the Church could never have integrated Arianism or Mohammedanism; but there is an urgent need for spiritual sympathy, for inclusiveness and not exclusiveness, for consecration and not repression, for unity and not uniformity. The Roman Church proposes the short-cut method of Absorption but not a complete integration of Christian values and truths. Those who favour federation or intercommunion are false to the true conception of a universal group which the Christian ideal implies. True integration cannot come by adding together any number of smaller and independent groups. It can only come along lines of organic unity. And this desire for a truly integrated Church seems to be spreading over the whole world. Conference after conference has insisted on it. Protestant Churches have ceased to stand aloof in spiritual isolation.

'Instead of moving away from each other on their radii, Protestant Churches are moving inwards to the centre and leaving the circumference. At that centre they find their Lord; and the nearer they are to Him the nearer they are to one another.'[1]

And as soon as all Christians bear a common love to Christ and strip themselves of the prejudices and impulses which blind the single eye for Truth, so soon shall we see a true integration of Christian values and a Universal Apostolic Church on Earth.

[1] Bruce, p. 234.

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